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Volume 12

APRIL 1951

Number 7

## *The Leading French Novelists of the Present Moment*

ALBERT GUÉRARD<sup>1</sup>

A VERY simple phrase may conceal a variety of pitfalls. What, in literature, is "the present moment"? Is it the week, with its box score of sales duly reported in the critical magazines? Is it the season, the decade, the generation? And what is meant by "leading"? Leading in popularity, leading in critical acclaim, leading in formal honors, leading in the race to immortality? We should adopt, I believe, the time-honored division: in literature there are only two classes, the quick and the dead. The quick count, even though they wrote centuries ago: the dead are dead, even though still unburied. The literary scene is composed of the books which are alive to the men of today.

But there are many kinds and degrees of life. It is probable that the French, and ourselves, still read Dumas, Balzac, Hugo, perhaps even Eugène Sue, in preference to many shadowy or notorious contemporaries. It was taken for granted that Zola was passé long before he passed away. Yet more copies of his works were sold in the twenty years after his death than in the heyday of his noisy popular-

ity. With us, *Nana* is breaking records in the cheap reprint trade. Guedalla—do you remember Guedalla?—in a flippant obituary on Proust, announced "the passing of the Marcel wave." Yet, only yesterday, two ambitious studies of Proust appeared: one by André Maurois, the other by Frederic Green. For this fact of primordial importance, the French have a useful word, which we might do well to borrow: *présence*.

"Among those present," and apart from the classics in serene enjoyment of immortality, we must mention those writers who are still a discovery, a delight, an enigma, a power. Such are, emphatically, Stendhal, Dostoevski, Joyce, and Proust. They are, in a very literal sense, "leading French novelists" at the present hour. We do not propose to include them in this survey. We must, however, note the decisive fact of their presence.

It is a sobering process to look over the list of former candidates to immortality. Members of the French Academy, of the younger, smaller, more vital Goncourt Academy, winners of Goncourt prizes and even of Nobel prizes, sensational best sellers, centers of critical storms . . .

<sup>1</sup> Brandeis University; emeritus professor of general literature, Stanford University.

where are the snows of yesteryear? Thirty-five years ago I studied *Five Masters of French Romance*: Bourget, Barrès, Loti, Anatole France, Romain Rolland. Bourget is gone beyond any hope of resuscitation. Loti and Barrès could still be enjoyed, without having attained even minor classic rank. Anatole France and Romain Rolland have preserved a public, yet their presence is not actively felt. A generation later the excellent scholar and critic Georges Lemaitre discussed *Four French Novelists*, Giraudoux, Paul Morand, Proust, and Gide and, in a supplementary volume, André Maurois. What happened to his quintet? Paul Morand, with his synthetic aura of cosmopolitan wickedness, is consigned to merciful oblivion, like Abel Hermant before him. Giraudoux survives, but in his later avatar, as a dramatist, not as a novelist. Maurois is remembered as a biographer. Proust, beyond the grave, and Gide, on the brink of eternity, are still living masters.

It would be idle to classify the novels of the present day according to schools. Groups there may be, like *L'Abbaye* some forty years ago, Dada, the Existentialists. Their members were friends and groping for common aims: they never achieved unity—thank the Lord!

*À tout seigneur tout honneur*: we must inevitably begin with the Grand Old Woman (the term *lady* might be open to challenge) and the Grand Old Man of contemporary French literature, Colette and Gide (and how ludicrously the impressive title sits on either of them!). Sidonie Gabrielle Colette (b. 1873), a Burgundian country girl, retained her freshness, her love for gardens, animals and farm life, in the worst circles of Parisian sophistication. Under the influence of her first husband, the musical critic Henry Gauthier-Villars ("Willy"

as a humorist), she wrote novels combining innate simplicity with complete freedom from moral restraint. Like her heroines Claudine and Minne, she could have been called "an ingenuous libertine." She escaped from Willy only to make a career as a music-hall dancer. The miracle is that, in such an environment, she should have preserved unsullied the purity of her style and thought. No more translucent French was ever written. Although I love her animal stories, I agree with the general verdict that her masterpiece is *Chéri* (with an even stronger sequel, *La Fin de Chéri*), a paradoxical story of overwhelming passion, as searching as *Manon Lescaut*, in the setting of the Parisian demimonde. At least as late as 1941 (*Julie de Carneilhan*), Colette had lost none of her power. And her recent books of reminiscences, even though they are not creative, can still be read with delight.

To write of André Gide, who died last February at the age of eighty-one, as though he were first of all a novelist would be a distortion. He eludes definition; he is a *moraliste* in the French sense: a student of manners, deeply concerned with moral questions. The term *moraliste* may seem odd, for it is well known that, in one important aspect, Gide's ethical code is the reverse of normal and that the most searching, the most self-revealing, of his books is called *L'Immoraliste*. Perhaps the chief function of a true moralist is to challenge morality when it has become mere mores, a lifeless mass of traditions; in that sense, Socrates was a demoralizer.

Gide came slowly to the novel properly so called; he wrote poems, dramas, treatises, allegories, travel books, innumerable essays. Some of his novellettes (*Récits*) pose a moral problem with



quiet urgency: *Straight Is the Gate*, *The Pastoral Symphony*. With *The Caves of the Vatican* (1914), he finally wrote a full-length work of fiction; but he still preferred to call it by the medieval term *solie*. Set in the Catholic world, the story is ironically dramatic and at times frankly farcical. It is there that he discusses the doctrine of the free, or gratuitous, act: his hero throws a fellow-passenger out of a speeding train, just to demonstrate the freedom of his will. Before *The Caves* Gide had remained an esoteric writer; this frankly entertaining book was his introduction to the general public.

The only work that Gide consented to call a novel is *Les Faux-monnayeurs* (*The Counterfeiters* [1926]), which may have influenced Aldous Huxley in his middle period. Here we encounter a juvenile gang, engaged in passing counterfeit money. The symbol is at the same time obvious in the rough, puzzling and disquieting in its applications. The tale is told from the point of view of an adult, an author who is unduly interested in one of the young heroes (cf. *Death in Venice*) and who is writing a novel called *The Counterfeiters*. Later on, in a book called *Diary of "The Counterfeiters,"* Gide tells us minutely how he wrote a novel about a man who was writing a novel called *The Counterfeiters*.

Later books like *Theseus* can hardly be called novels. Gide seems to have found his ideal mode of expression in his voluminous and very uneven *Journal*. This is merely a glimpse of Proteus. Let us note that André Gide, like Colette but with a totally different sonority, is a master of lucid, classical prose. There is a Huguenot strain in him; he hates the ornate and the baroque. In some of his stories the effort of renunciation is felt; wilful austerity is an affectation. But in

*The Caves*, *The Counterfeiters*, the *Journal*, simplicity is simple indeed. With eyes wide open, clear and unafraid, we are conscious of skirting an abyss.

A striking feature of modern literature is the enormous novel or series of novels, *le roman-fleuve*, flowing like a mighty stream. Perhaps the master of that technique was Balzac with his *Human Comedy*. Then came Zola with his *Rougon-Macquart*, and Romain Rolland with his *Jean-Christophe*. Our feverish age, in spite of cinema, radio, and television, finds space and leisure for these behemoths. It is striking that the short story, on the other hand, is receding as a literary genre.

We may single out three authors of such modern sagas (Galsworthy's *Forsyte* will immediately come to mind). Roger Martin du Gard (b. 1881) is the least obtrusive. He wrote a sensitive commentary on the Dreyfus crisis, a novel mostly in dialogue, *Jean Barois*. His major work is *The Thibault*, the quiet, unhurried picture of a conservative bourgeois family. It was perhaps Martin du Gard's pacificism, rather than his sober mastery of psychology and style, that won for him the Nobel prize in 1937. The American public seems to have been puzzled rather than entranced by this work of rare dignity. Even in France, Roger Martin du Gard is respected rather than popular.

Georges Duhamel (b. 1884), on the contrary, has abundantly reaped his reward. A medical man, he wrote during the first World War two admirable series of essays, *Life of the Martyrs* and *Civilization*, which at this hour have recovered their timeliness. Devoting himself entirely to literature, he gave us five volumes on a modest clerk, *Salavin*, who seeks and achieves saintliness without faith. Then, largely out of his own experience, he wrote the vast *Chronicle of*

the *Pasquier*. Father Pasquier is an unforgettable and delightful character: elegant, irresponsible, a Harold Skimpole and a Mr. Micawber, he pursues none the less an extraordinarily difficult enterprise—in middle life, with no reliable income, and with a family of five, to become a doctor. Compared with him, the heroes of *Life with Father* and *Cheaper by the Dozen* are slight caricatures. Of the five children, Laurent (Duhamel himself) is a biologist; Suzanne, an actress; Cécile, a musician; Fernand, an envious mediocrity; Joseph, a would-be Napoleon of finance. The whole cycle has great unity, but each volume is complete in itself, with one central character and a definite plot—not overstressed. The style, while not offering the classic perfection of Gide's, is pure and pleasing. There could hardly be a better introduction to French life in the first half of the twentieth century than the *Pasquier* chronicle. Duhamel, active and kindly, has turned into the quasi-official head of French literature and a power in the international scene; in this, again, his career closely resembles that of Galsworthy.

Louis Farigoule (b. 1885), better known as Jules Romains, is more elusive. Not, like Gide, because of extreme subtlety but because there is in his work a vein of mystification. A light and very entertaining book, *Les Copains* (*The Chums*, or *The Boys in the Backroom*), tells of practical jokes on an epic scale. Two of his best plays, *Donogoo-Tonka* and *Knock*, have for their theme "creative mystification." It is not certain that his "Unanimism" (the collective soul), his *Handbook of Deification*, his extraretinian vision, his *Seven Mysteries of Europe*, were not elaborate pranks. His first novel of note, *Mort de Quelqu'un*, was, as the English translation has it,

about *The Death of a Nobody*: no plot—just the notation of the semiconscious changes this death makes in the chance group of his fellow-lodgers. The *Lucienne* series (*Psyche*) is slight. But in *Men of Good Will* (1932-48) he worked on a monumental scale. A masterly advertiser, he sold the world and Mr. Clifton Fadiman the idea that this Mississippi among novels was unexampled in method as well as in scope. He bade us withhold judgment until the design had become manifest. Perhaps he sincerely hoped that the pattern would be revealed to him as the work progressed. But the design never achieved definiteness. We have twenty-eight volumes of semifictitious journalism which, between an arbitrary point of departure and a no less arbitrary end, wander aimlessly through every stratum of French and European society. Whole volumes are so light as to be an insult to the readers; others dwell on labored eroticism in the worst Gallic tradition. We hoped almost to the end. When the series slowed down to a stop, there were but two verdicts open: *chef-d'œuvre manqué* or *faux chef-d'œuvre*. Yet the will to create a masterpiece was not without its reward. If as a unit, the amorphous chronicle does not remotely compare with the *Human Comedy*, or even with the *Rougon-Macquart*, it contains innumerable sketches and scenes, and two whole volumes (*Verdun*), which are of commanding value. But I'd gladly give the whole monstrous centipede for one single, strange, and powerful drama, *Cromedeyre-le-Vieil*.

We repeat that any classification among the innumerable company of French novelists would be arbitrary. There are no doubt a number of Catholic writers, or, more exactly, of Catholics who write. But they do not form a school. In François Mauriac (b. 1885) the re-

gional element was at first more evident than the religious. He gave us keen satires of his native Bordeaux, with its winey and exceedingly snobbish aristocracy (*Préséances*). But he went far beyond that theme. A strict moralist, conservative, not conventional, he severely condemns the meanness and the Pharisaeism of Catholic bourgeois society. There is little joy of living in his novels: a family outwardly of the most unimpeachable respectability is described as a *Nœud de vipères* (*Vipers' Tangle*). His works are built with the simplicity, the apparent ease, the flawless rigor, the tragic sense of sin and fate, of his favorite classic, Racine. His Catholicism, ever present in his novels, is not obtrusive; in his essays, his confessions, his *Life of Christ*, his faith, ardent and austere, is fully revealed. Since the war, he has become an active "Director of Conscience," and his articles on current issues are weighty documents.

There is one thing in common between Mauriac and Bernanos: both, because they were Catholics, condemned the rebels in the Spanish civil war and considered their victory as a disaster for the true Christian spirit. Both also refused to follow Vichy's policy of abject capitulation. Georges Bernanos (1888-1950) gave us disquieting, powerful books in the spirit of Huysmans and Léon Bloy—and beyond them perhaps Baudelaire. They are studies in mysticism, satanism, and simple holiness, in a style that is tormented, intense, with unforgettable flashes across the tragic murk (*Under the Star of Satan*, *Joy*, *Diary of a Country Priest*). His last novel, *Monsieur Ouine*, a subtle and perplexing study in evil, was smothered in the cosmic evil of the war years; it deserves to be rescued.

Julien Green (b. 1900) did not become a Catholic until his most characteristic

work had appeared. But he already belonged in the spirit to the same world as Mauriac and Bernanos. A Virginian, but born and bred in Paris, little influenced by American literature, he offers at least some resemblances with the sin-haunted spirit of Faulkner. His best-known works are *Adrienne Mesurat* (*The Closed Garden*), *Mont Cinère*, *Léviathan* (*The Dark Journey*), and the middle story in *Varouna*.

Dadaism was the school to end all schools, since its only aim was deliberate and inextricable chaos. It and similar tendencies left some traces in the arts (cubism, surrealism) and in poetry (André Breton) but very little in the novel. Jean Cocteau (b. 1891) found great delight in *épater le bourgeois* (flabbergasting the Babbitts). But when he wrote stories, *Thomas l'imposteur*, *Le grand écart*, and particularly *Les Enfants terribles*, they were curiously intelligible. If there was mystery, anguish, a sense of cosmic guilt, in *Les Enfants terribles*, this, in 1929, was sheer psychological realism. Cocteau, who can do all things, and nothing indifferently, is now giving most of his attention to the drama and the cinema. A rich bourgeois himself, with a sound classical education, he shows no lack of commercial shrewdness.

Louis Aragon (b. 1897) went through a Dadaist period and plunged into communism, from which he never emerged. But in middle life he gave vast novels of bourgeois decay, *Les Cloches de Bâle* (*The Bells of Basel*), *Les Beaux quartiers* (*Residential Quarter*), *Les Voyageurs de l'impériale* (*The Century Was Young*). These were by no means revolutionary in technique and not strikingly subversive in ideology. They are good pessimistic naturalism and show the influence of old Zola more clearly than those of Tristan Tzara or James Joyce. During the war,

Aragon wrote beautiful patriotic poems, traditional in form and inspiration, and, oddly enough, a sentimental novel, *Aurélien*, the story of a great love unfulfilled. If the cold war came to an end, Comrade Aragon would be ripe (over-ripe?) for the Academy.

Louis Céline (Louis Ferdinand Destouches, b. 1894) does not belong to the Dadaist group or to any other. He owes nothing to James Joyce, E. E. Cummings, or Henry Miller, although they have points in common. A man of the people who became a doctor, he could have forced the gates of the bourgeoisie, but hated and despised the *salauds*—France's vigorous term for the *realists*. Like Gide, who, culturally, stands at the other pole, he was lured for a while by "that tremendous gleam in the East," the Bolshevik Revolution; and, like Gide, he was frustrated. Then he went over to fascism but found no comfort in it. He is a Timon of the slums, a Swift of the gutter, nauseated by the Yahoos among whom he is doomed to live. His rambling novels, *Voyage au bout de la nuit* (*Voyage to the End of the Night*) and *La Mort à crédit* (*Death on the Instalment Plan*), are lawless to the point of insanity. They are written, not in standard French, but in pungent Parisian argot; and they are so outrageously filthy that, although the French are not renowned for squeamishness, many passages had to be left in blank. There is no excuse for Céline, except the unanswerable one: power. His nightmares have a weird life. His indignation devours his filth, like a fuliginous yet cleansing flame. He is not a witness, and he is not a prophet: he is Céline, and we accept him with reluctant gratitude.

Before the war there was already a group of Existentialists under the leadership of Jean-Paul Sartre. Sartre himself

is a professional philosopher: he wrote an enormous thesis on *Being and Nothingness*, and his doctrine takes its proper place in the genealogy of thought: it is, to be technical, a phenomenology, influenced by Husserl and Heidegger. But the very problem of essence and existence goes back, far beyond Descartes and the Scholastics, to the founders of Western thought, Plato and Aristotle. Existentialism is not a system but a feeling. There is no identity, indeed no harmony, between the universe without and the universe within. The result is anguish and dread; the anguish of Kierkegaard, but also of Pascal.

I submit—unfashionably—that in a discussion of literature, the technical aspects of Existentialism are incompetent, irrelevant, and immaterial. There are many "existentialisms," including several Christian brands, and most of them have not found literary expression. The essential fact is the sense of cosmic chaos, induced by the social chaos in which we are living. This sense was keenly felt by Céline, who is no philosopher, and by Kafka, who died in 1924. The tendency of the group is better expressed in *The Myth of Sisyphus*, by Albert Camus, than in the formidable treatise of Sartre. Camus' key word is: the Absurd. The world was not created according to the norms of human reason, nor is it governed for the special benefit of the human race. From the point of view of man, it is absurd and unconsciously hostile. But man, by the mere fact of conceiving and naming the Absurd, transcends and conquers it. He does not need to capitulate to the dark forces of chaos. He can create, within himself, and round himself, an area of precarious but luminous order. It is the spirit of Pascal and Vigny: man greater, through the dignity of thought, than the senseless universe which crushes



him. It is the spirit of the Resistance: Sartre and Camus refused to collaborate with evil. They have remained interested in public affairs, without being engaged in paltry politics.

Jean-Paul Sartre (b. 1905) first wrote *Nausea*, an expression of utter cosmic disgust, but in terms of such simple realism that its profundity was not fully revealed. Then, on the eve of the war, and during the war, he devoted himself to an ambitious series: *Les Chemins de la liberté* (*Roads to Freedom*), perhaps a somberly ironical title. So far, *The Age of Reason*, *The Reprieve*, and quite recently *Troubled Sleep* have appeared. The picture of bourgeois anarchism and corruption is all too familiar, and the philosophy purely negative: we might be reading *Eyeless in Gaza*. But Sartre's talent as a novelist is no less manifest than his gifts as a dramatist or an essayist. With *The Reprieve*, he has attempted a "simultaneous" method which, disconcerting at first, is extremely effective. In the middle of a paragraph, without any warning, he shifts from one place, from one set of events, to others which happen at the same time, and he thus creates a paradoxical sense of continuity. Sartre is an excellent manager of his own fame, and he is reaping his reward. But the reward is well deserved; at forty-six, he is a major figure, not only in France but in world literature.

Albert Camus (b. 1913), more restrained, indeed severely classical in technique and style, is at the same time transparent and profound—a puzzling combination. His first novel, *L'Etranger* (*The Stranger*), is, on the surface, the story of a commonplace personality, enmeshed by chance in a criminal affair. Then we realize that the sorry protagonist is not a mere nonentity but in fact a "stranger," alien to the scruples,

the traditional obligations, of our race. At times we wonder if the stranger is not more real than we and if the values he so completely ignores are not the merest convention. *La Peste* (*The Plague*) is an allegory with a technique akin to Kafka. The stricken city, Oran, is the world; and the various attitudes—despair, frivolity, profiteering, escape, service—are the choices before us today.

Among the writers whom even the most cursory survey cannot overlook stand André Malraux and Henry de Montherlant. Malraux (b. 1901), a student of oriental arts and languages, took an active part in the Chinese revolution and in the Spanish civil war, and rose to high rank in the Resistance movement. Like Lawrence of Arabia, he is at the same time a scholar and a man of action. He writes tales of rough energy and physical endurance—*The Conquerors*, *Man's Fate*, *Days of Wrath*, *Man's Hope*—in a style that is direct, tense, with a controlled but unmistakable quiver of passion. He, like Sartre and Camus, shows what treasures of moral courage there are still in France. Strangely, this ardent revolutionist has remained loyal to General de Gaulle, who now openly advocates an alliance with Franco.

Henry de Montherlant (b. 1896) was at first the poet of war and of sport, from football to bullfights. He produced a masterpiece of gray realism in *Les Céliataires* (*Lament for the Death of an Upper Class* in the English version, *Perish in Their Pride* in the American). In the *Costals* series (*Young Girls*) he gave a self-caricature of the artist living for the artist's sake, a creature at the same time contemptible, humorous, and fascinating. During the Occupation he practiced the utter moral defeatism he had preached. He has now turned, with great success, to the stage.

Two clear-cut yet enigmatic figures: do they belong to literature? Pierre Benoit (b. 1886) had everything; education, world-wide experience, style, extraordinary deftness in tangling and unraveling a plot. In *L'Atlantide* he concocted the ideal best seller: a Rider Haggard theme, but with a rich background of culture, a sophisticated yet direct style, and a dash of elegant eroticism. But he found it hard to escape from his formula, and his novels, invariably entertaining, have become a well-advertised, reliable, strictly standardized product. To be an intelligent entertainer is no mean achievement; but Benoit makes us realize what a giant old Dumas was.

Georges Simenon's (b. 1903) case is more puzzling. He produces brief books with the never failing abundance of an Edgar Wallace; and his Inspector Maigret stories are good, straight detective stuff. But even the Maigret tales have atmosphere and psychological realism. André Gide thought very highly of

Simenon, and Gide's word goes far.<sup>2</sup>

If we wanted a candid picture of the French literary scene, we should add that the very best sellers were *Clochemerle*, the cheapest kind of scatological farce, and the concoctions of Maurice Dekobra, a clever entertainer for those who cannot rise to the Pierre Benoit level.

France is swarming with competent novelists, and with dramatists, poets, philosophers, as well; but this does not prevent her from swooping ravenously upon every kind of American fiction. Most of these verdant writers—from both sides of the Atlantic—will soon be dead leaves. But the surge of artistic life is impressive. France, as a power, and even as a nation, aspires to disappear; there may be no political France tomorrow, only a province of the West. But French culture today is second to none; and it has not degenerated from the greatest ages in her storied past.

<sup>2</sup> *J'en passe, et des meilleurs*: I regret not to give a word of gratitude to at least a dozen excellent writers whose works I have enjoyed. [Ed.: See also p. 414.]

## *A Plea for a Theater of Gusto*

E. J. WEST<sup>1</sup>

STRANGE tags, once heard or read, no matter when or where, oddly and persistently haunt the mind. One for me is a remark made by some famous lecturer to the effect that it is much easier to fill an hour than to empty one. As one whose business for a quarter of a century has been the filling of other people's hours in two capacities, as a teacher and as a director of plays, I have frequently asked myself whether, in filling them, I have also at least tried to empty each hour for

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my varied audiences by extracting from each moment its fulness of experience, its possible richness of content, its intensity. To empty an hour in that way, rather than to fill it by merely bridging over a gap from the preceding to the following hour, is even more important in the theater than it is in the classroom. I believe that teaching can be an art, but there is no possible debate concerning whether the theater is an art. John Keats once wrote in one of those uncannily inevitable letters which form so precious a

part of our literary heritage that "the excellence of every art is its intensity," a view which he later properly qualified by suggesting that, with its intensity, art "should be great and unobtrusive, a thing which enters into one's soul, and does not startle it or amaze it with itself, but with its subject."

Now obviously in making a plea for a theater of gusto, I am suggesting that the excellence of an art lies in its intensity, but lest I be misunderstood as pleading only for the violence of farce or the vehemence of melodrama, I hasten to state my belief that theater as art can be great and unobtrusive, a thing which enters into one's soul, so that one realizes unconsciously at the time and consciously only afterward that the experience has been a memorable one, one that has been worth the having in the largest sense, because it has been filled with moments which were lived, however vicariously, to the full. After all, it is wisdom to seek vicarious experience, to widen our mental and spiritual horizons, since physical horizons, even when they may include, as have mine these twenty years and more in a little Colorado town, the majesty and mystery of mountains, are for most of us fairly limited. And to me theater is an art capable of enabling us to live intensely, to *experience* life with gusto and the full flavor of sensuous reaction to exciting and provocative stimuli. To talk of a theater of gusto may seem redundant, since to those who have learned the value and the function of the arts the excellence of every art is its intensity, but my practical theater work has made me realize that the nature of theater has during the last seventy-five years too frequently been misinterpreted by those who have been most actively concerned with it.

During the nineties, when he was a

critic on a London weekly, George Bernard Shaw constantly urged the theater to take itself seriously as "a factory of thought, a prompter of conscience, an elucidator of social conduct, an armory against despair and dullness, and a temple of the Ascent of Man." Shaw himself has demonstrated again and again how effectively the theater may concern itself with thought and conscience and social conduct, but he has done so effectively because he has realized pretty consistently throughout his career as a dramatist, and always when he has been at his best, that the theater is also an armory against despair and dullness, against those constant enemies who threaten to take from us the *joie de vivre*, the zest for living, the smelling and tasting and touching and hearing and seeing of the experience of life with gusto. For all the emphasis upon thesis and purpose, upon thought and conscience and social conduct which inevitably found its way into Shaw's masterpiece, *Saint Joan*, it is not of these but of life itself and the gusto of living that we are reminded when Joan, speaking with an eloquence and intensity which grasp the moments and empty them of their living content, chooses death to imprisonment and explains her choice:

It is no hardship to drink water if the water be clean. Bread has no sorrow for me, and water no affliction. But to shut me from the light of the sky and the sight of the fields and flowers; to chain my feet so that I can never again ride with the soldiers nor climb the hills; to make me breathe foul damp darkness, and keep me from everything that brings me back to the love of God when your wickedness and foolishness tempt me to hate Him: all this is worse than the furnace in the Bible that was heated seven times. I could do without my warhorse; I could drag about in a skirt; I could let the banners and the trumpets and the knights and soldiers pass me and leave me behind as they leave the other women, if only I could still hear

the wind in the trees, the larks in the sunshine, the young lambs crying through the healthy frost, and the blessed church bells that send my angel voices floating to me on the wind. But without these things I cannot live; and by your wanting to take them away from me, or from any human creature, I know that your counsel is of the devil, and that mine is of God.

I thoroughly lose patience with those earnest and aesthetic souls who spell both drama and theater with capitals throughout and pronounce them both GOD, but I as thoroughly suspect that we have in our time heard too much of the counsel which is of the devil and which tries to urge us that the theater must be only a forum or a pulpit or a temple. The lecturer, the teacher, the director—each must remember that it is his duty not only to fill an hour but to empty it; the dramatist must remember as well that he must not be a lecturer only, that when he lectures he must not seem to be lecturing at all, just as Shaw does not seem to be lecturing in the passage I just quoted. I fully realize that the theater must of necessity concern itself with thought, with conscience, with social conduct, if it is to justify itself as an adult form of entertainment, as a vital part of the experience of living. My only protest is that too many of us today have listened to the voices of Shaw and others less gifted, urging us to take our theater seriously as "a factory of thought, a prompter of conscience, an elucidator of social conduct, and a temple of the Ascent of Man," that too many of us have forgotten that after all there is not one theater but many ("In the house of my father there are many mansions"), and my theater, *the* theater, the good theater, is as much the house of God as any building that man has ever built, and all the many mansions in it are not only habitable but potentially thrilling and intensely alive.

The theater is not the drama of print; it is not the drama at all, either of social significance or of any other one thing; it is what the particular theater you patronize happens to invite you to see and to hear on any particular night. It will not restrict itself to any single meaning; it will not allow itself to be judged only by scientific analysis (although at its best it is secure against such analysis). But it insists always upon emotional reaction; it insists upon encompassing in their turn all sides of life, the tawdry and tinselly as well as the tautly tragic and terrifying, the silly and the naughty as well as the sublime or the nauseating, the sordid and the searing, the sultry and the subtle, the warped and weary as well as the wise and witty. And it is because I believe so sincerely and so firmly, and as the result of experience not only as a player but as, in a small way, one who has for some twenty-five years given thought and conscience and time and labor to the theater, that I plead that we ask our theater for gusto and take what it gives us with equal gusto. To ask it for gusto is to ask that it give us the fulness and the multiplicity of the experience of living; to take it with gusto is to react without prejudice or preconception to whatever it happens to offer us on the particular night, to try to learn as much about it and its complex art as we want to learn about the whole business of living, so that we may take even its frequent failures not as time wasted but as experience gained.

Hebbel once defined the theater as the only possible pause in a man's life. The definition was singularly acute, since, however uncomplimentary he meant it to be, it showed his own sense of the theater as a unique kind of experience, something distinguished from the rest of living by its quality, that one finally distinguish-



ing characteristic of any thing or any person in this chaotic world of ours. But it was a bad definition because it suggests that, in being the only pause in a man's life, theater is only a pastime, a sort of vacation from living. The theater does steal time, but the theft can be valuable if theater does something with the time and does not simply do away with it. Theater kills not the time it steals but makes it live; it should within that time make us entirely *aware*, constantly conscious; it should make us feel lust for life as opposed to our more normal ennui with the emptiness of existence.

Gusto I have tried to give to my theater as actor and director and to take to my theater as audience-member. Some ten years ago, in *I Married an Angel*, I was as excited and thrilled by the sheer grace and loveliness of Vera Zorina as I was delighted by the slashing satire upon self-consciousness and pretentiousness in art in a number which burlesqued both petrified ballet technique and freak surrealistic painting. I have found equal spine-tingling excitement in *Carmen Jones* and in Bizet's original opera. I was as much carried away by the sheer technical virtuosity and histrionic genius of George M. Cohan in *I'd Rather Be Right* as I was inwardly tickled by the pungent criticism of a New Deal of which I approved. I enjoyed the magnificent melodrama and robustious rhetoric of Maurice Evans' production of the full-length *Hamlet* as much as I regretted the flaccid and befuddled mishandling called the *G.I. Hamlet* (as my twelve-year-old son remarked, "What did the G.I.'s ever do to deserve this?"). And I fancy I could distinguish the difference in the gusto of experience of vicarious living between the first magnificent melodrama and the talked-about rather than lived-through gusto of *Richard II* as produced by the

same actor-manager. I fancy I actually enjoyed Evans' *Richard II*, which I heartily disliked, more than did those who approached it with the dim and dim-witted reverence which certain minds feel they must adopt when they approach Shakespeare. I enjoyed it more because, although I heartily agree with the late Tucker Brooke, who once suggested to me that the alternative title to the play should be "fine words butter no parsnips," I detected in Evans in the title role a fumbling sense of gusto for one side of the richness of theatrical and of human experience, the sheer delight of filling the mouth with delicious words and of tasting them as he uttered them. Theater *is* music, as Shakespeare is music, and part of the gusto of the theater is the hearing of words with gusto.

I have rarely, I think, been bored by the theater in performance, which means the theater with the audience present; and although I have been maddened and enraged and infuriated by the theater, my theater, in rehearsal, I was never bored there either. I have seen many plays which I disliked, many actors whom I have thought bad, many productions (most of my own seventy-five plus, incidentally) which seemed puzzle-headed. But I have always tried to take into the theater with me, in whatever capacity or by whatever door I have entered it, the sense of gusto which is compounded of willingness to accept rather than desire to be given. I have been equally willing to be transported by the abstract exhibition of sheer acting technique which Otis Skinner used to offer in a completely incredible play called *The Honor of the Family*, by the vividly theatrical handling of story in *The Trial of Mary Dugan* or in *Libel* or in Priestley's *Dangerous Corner*, by the

compelling social protest of *Waiting for Lefty* or *The Cradle Will Rock*, and by the mingled tense tempo and moving mysticism of Ardrey's *Thunder Rock*. I have asked only that plays give to me the feeling that I am present at *theater*, at something uniquely an experience, always an experience conveyed to my sensuous being through the observation of the performance of the human voice and of the human body in action. If thought, if conscience, if social conduct, are treated theatrically, that is, in terms which provoke expression through the mingled eloquence of the speaking voice and the moving figure, they are welcome guests within the theater, and if they be treated with gusto, let them be greeted with gusto.

When Shaw attempted to write an economic treatise on social conduct like *The Apple Cart*, which was so untheatrically stated that he felt obliged to sandwich a farcical interlude between the two didactic and preachy acts, I felt the theater had forgotten that, whatever else it may be, it must be diverting and interesting. And yet, in a production of that definitely untheatrical vehicle, I saw and heard an unappreciated actor named George Gaul take with gusto a speech of over three pages and by his expert appreciation for the flavor of the words compel a rather stodgy audience to applause which was the accolade not to the difficult social content of the speech but to the vitality and the intensity of the experience of hearing a finely trained voice in bravura performance. When in a play called *Golden Boy* Clifford Odets attempted to force upon a cheaply and unevenly written script an aura of comment upon the Ascent of Man from brutal prize-fighting to angelic violin-playing, without persuading me theatrically that the hero

could knock out either Joe Louis or Yehudi Menuhin, I felt the theater was trying to make a nickelodeon look like a cathedral. And yet in a performance of that play I was filled with gusto for the business of living by watching the gusto with which the admirably trained Group Theatre ensemble played into each other's hands and made histrionic bricks without dramatic straw. When S. N. Behrman indulged in political mysticism and untheatrical radicalism in such plays as *Wine of Choice* and *No Time for Comedy*, I felt political science and economic theory should be confined to discussion in the columns of weekly reviews. And yet when the theatrical genius of Guthrie McClintic and the warmly vital sympathy of Katherine Cornell and the superbly imposed gesture and movement and pantomime of the then unknighthed and un-Leighed Laurence Olivier set to work upon the script of *No Time for Comedy*, they injected into it gusto which made its performance a continuously interesting evening in the theater. When the once truly theatrical Eugene O'Neill began to slip from theater into psychoanalysis long ago in *The Hairy Ape*, I wished psychiatry might stay within the clinic. And yet from that play there clings hauntingly to the memory the gusto of old Paddy's crooning lament for the departed glory and adventure of the sailing ships:

Oh, to be back in the fine days of my youth,  
 ochone! Oh, there was fine beautiful ships them  
 days—clippers wid tall masts touching the sky  
 —fine strong men in them—men that was sons  
 of the sea as if 'twas the mother that bore them.  
 Oh, the clean skins of them, and the clear eyes,  
 the straight backs and the full chests of them!  
 Brave men they was, and bold men surely! We'd  
 be sailing out, bound down round the Horn  
 maybe. We'd be making sail in the dawn, with a  
 fair breeze, singing a chanty song wid no care to  
 it. And astern the land would be sinking low

and dying out, but we'd give it no heed but a laugh, and never a look behind. For the day that was, was enough, for we was free men—and I'm thinking 'tis only slaves do be giving heed to the day that's gone or the day to come—until they're old like me. . . . Yerra, what's the use of talking? 'Tis a dead man's whisper. 'Twas them days men belonged to ships, not now. 'Twas them days a ship was part of the sea, and a man was part of a ship, and the sea joined all together and made it one.

When a potentially great and finely competent dramatist like Sean O'Casey became too involved in laments for the fate of Ireland in the days of the Black and Tans, as in *Juno and the Paycock*, I reflected that social protests belong to the lecturer's platform. And yet that play in production throbs with the shiftless Boyle's extravagant gusto for his mean little life, and the memory rings with the moving cries of the mothers of men who die for paper-phrases, as Mrs. Tancred sobs out the passion and the poignancy of grief which is as much a part of the savor of living as Paddy's dream of the sailing ships or, shall we say, as Falstaff's rhapsody on sack or Hamlet's brooding reproaches to himself and to the times which are out of joint:

Me home is gone, now: he was me only child, an' to think that he was lyin' for a whole night stretched out on the side of a lonely country lane, with his head, his darlin' head, that I often kissed an' fondled, half hidden in the wather of a runnin' brook. An' I'm told he was the leadher of the ambush where me nex' door neighbour, Mrs. Mannin', lost her Free State soldier son. An' now here's the two of us oul' women, standin' one on each side of a scales o' sorra, balanced be the bodies of our two dead darlin' sons. . . . Mother o' God, Mother o' God, where were you when me darlin' son was riddled with bullets, when me darlin' son was riddled with bullets! . . . Sacred Heart of the Crucified Jesus, take away our hearts o' stone an' give us hearts o' flesh! . . . Take away this murderin' hate . . . an' give us Thine own eternal love.

I do not mean to suggest by these quotations that gusto in the theater is produced only by memorable words. The pantomime of Skinner and Olivier, in the plays noted, that of Laurette Taylor in *Outward Bound* some years ago or of Pauline Lord in the recent road production of *The Glass Menagerie*, the Stanislavski-influenced ensemble of the Group Theatre in *Golden Boy*, or the slickly professional ensemble of a Denver stock company in *The Trial of Mary Dugan*, have made memorable evenings in the theater for me, instinct with the power of sensuous and full living. Even more vivid in the experiencing and in the remembering were the productions of *The Brothers Ashkenazi* and *Three Cities* some ten years ago by Maurice Schwartz's Yiddish Art Theatre. Here every one of a group of over a hundred players was inspired by an obviously dynamic director to give to a production in their own Yiddish tongue through pantomimic and inflectional intensity a full-bodied and pulsing experience of life lived so vividly for two or three hours that I was wearied in body but excited in mind and spirit at the end of a performance. It is the plasticity of the human figure and the flexibility of the human voice and their varied expression of the human emotions that constitute the true gusto of theater in performance. There is a wild joy in uninhibited but planned movement, in soaring and sweeping sound, in sharp contrasts of farce and tragedy, pageant and melodrama, which empties the moments for the audience of every drop of capacity for living, for experiencing, for knowing the world. Only in the superb productions of Orson Welles during his Mercury Theatre years have I witnessed anything like the gusto of the Yiddish Art Theatre. The magnificent orchestration of background music, of fine voices, of tramping

and scuffling feet, made Welles's hour-and-a-half road production of *Caesar*, with Tom Powers, Herbert Ransome, and Edmond O'Brien, almost unbearably moving, not because he had redone Shakespeare as a protest against fascism but because he had extracted from the old script the passionate humanity of the dramatist. In that production and in the exuberant horseplay and triumphant clowning of old Tom Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, in the smashing simplicity and wild-animal vitality of the 1939 production of Marc Blitzstein's *The Cradle Will Rock*, and in the muted but equally vibrant strains and moods of Shaw's *Heartbreak House*, Orson Welles, more than any other American of his day except Maurice Schwartz, brought gusto into the theater and swept the playhouse clean of the student's candle burning over the social protest, of the aesthete's incense burning before the decadent and petrifying image of some lifeless god called the Art Theater, and of the dead cocktail and cigarette stub of the sterily clever modern social comedian.

To me gusto is inherent in the true theater, the theater of performance, the theater of the actor with his body and his voice. The theater is the theater of performance. It can bring gusto to a script which is only a blueprint for production, or it can extract gusto from a script which is itself gusty literature. But it is the sense of living, of living every moment to the full, of living with intensity, that we have a right to ask of the theater. We should not ask it always to be great; we should not expect from it always appeals to thought, reminders to conscience, or lessons in social conduct. If it can be and can give all these, the better. But if it is merely but truly and honestly entertaining, it is an experience worth the having.

I am a theorist of theater in that I am wholeheartedly for the theater of gusto. I hold no brief for or against any kind of production, provided it partake of the nature and the quality of theater. I am happy that I have lived intensely equally with the inspired comics of the first Music Box Revues in those halcyon, thoughtless days before the Great Crash of 1929 and with the hard-drinking and hard-swearing leathernecks of Anderson and Stalling's *What Price Glory*, with the wise-cracking youngsters of the early Philip Barry comedies and with the gusty Americans of Sherwood's *The Petrified Forest*, with the deliciously insane Sycamores of *You Can't Take It with You* and with the vague and introspective but life-loving Russians of Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, with the sentimentalized trench-dwellers of Sherriff's *Journey's End* and with the agonizingly articulate sufferers in Shaw's finer plays, with the heartbreakingly funny Irishmen of the early O'Casey and the plaintively perceptive transplanted Hebrews of the early Odets. Parenthetically I may remark that I cannot live with the frustrations, the fixations, the psychoses and the neuroses of Mr. Williams' inhabitants of *The Streetcar Named Desire*, for there is no more gusto in *that* desire than there is pity or terror or any moving quality in the death of Mr. Miller's salesman. But Bobby Clark and Fannie Brice and Bob Benchley and Captain Flagg and Sergeant Quirt and Johnny Case and Linda Seton and Alan Squier and Gabby Maple and Duke Mantee and Granpa Sycamore and his brood and Olga and Masha and Irina and Juno and her strutting Paycock and Bessie Berger and Moe Axelrod have this in common—that they loved life wholly if not whole, with a love that is not only sacred but profane, that they share the desire to live the moment for its value, and by doing

so they enliven and intensify and fill and empty the hours we spend in their company. These are not only purveyors of pastime but guardians of the passing moments, making the playgoer feel as if he were possessed of a thousand vigilant eyes, of a thousand keenly receptive ears, capable of observing with breathless interest and haste, with thrilling passion and tense excitement, the mystery and the melancholy and the mirth and the madness of life.

Let us not confine our theater within any bounds; let us remember that its vitality lies in its variety, that appreciation of its gusto demands catholicity of taste. Let the theater empty its hours of pleasure or pain, thrill or tragedy, melody or mysticism, into our receptive eyes and ears, and empty our minds and hearts of their capacity for loving and living the many-colored spectacle of life. Our theater can be a night club as well as

a library, an amusement park as well as an art museum, a sideshow as well as a cathedral. Frequently it may be many or all of these at once. But it must be entertaining; it must be interesting; it must be alive. It must be the pause that refreshes, not the pause that simply blots out a space of existence. Theater is not drama, not the classroom, not social science, not religion, not thought, not conscience. Theater is performance, the theater of the actor, the theater in which we are audience-members on some particular evening, and, as the house lights dim and the curtain begins to open, we know again that unique experience of thrilling expectation which is our instinctive response to the desire for that intensified living which we always hope to encounter during the two hours' traffic of the stage, that recurrent and indefatigable trust that this particular evening will indeed be an enchanted evening.

## Browning's "Whatever Is, Is Right"

HOXIE N. FAIRCHILD<sup>1</sup>

AT FIRST glance the antithesis between Pope's view of life and Browning's seems undeniable but almost too blatantly obvious to be worth mentioning. One might, however, concede its usefulness in the teaching of college sophomores. Pope, the professor would inform his victims, believes in a neatly stratified universe in which

The bliss of man, could pride that blessing find,  
Is not to think or act beyond mankind.<sup>2</sup>

Each individual man, furthermore, must try to understand his personal limitations

as well as those of his species. It is not only the critic who is warned that

Nature to all things fixed the limits fit,  
And wisely curbed proud man's pretending wit.<sup>3</sup>

Just the opposite, the lecture continues, is Browning's

Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp,  
Or what's a heaven for?<sup>4</sup>

For him the good life is not acceptance of finitude but ceaseless battling toward unrealizable and therefore glorious goals. And here, the professor would add, is a contrast not only between Pope and

<sup>1</sup> Hunter College.

<sup>2</sup> *Essay on Man*, I, 189-90.

<sup>3</sup> *Essay on Criticism*, I, 52-53.

<sup>4</sup> *Andrea del Sarto*, 96-97.



Browning but between the static optimism of the eighteenth century and the dynamic optimism of the nineteenth.

This survey-course lecture I myself have delivered more than once, but a re-reading of Browning has made it impossible for me to deliver it again. It is simply not in accordance with the facts. Alexander Pope would heartily approve the thought, though not the style, of Browning's *Pisgah-Sights*. Since this poem is essential to my argument it must be quoted at some length:

How I see all of it,  
Life there, outlying!  
Roughness and smoothness,  
Shine and defilement,  
Grace and uncouthness:

All's lend-and-borrow;  
Good, see, wants evil,  
Joy demands sorrow,  
Angel weds devil!

"Which things must—*why* be?"

Vain our endeavour!  
So shall things aye be  
As they were ever.

"Such things should *so* be!"

Sage our desistence!  
Rough-smooth let globe be,  
Mixed—man's existence!

Only a learner,  
Quick one or slow one,  
Just a discernor,  
I would teach no one.  
I am earth's native:  
No rearranging it!  
I be creative,  
Chopping and changing it?

Here the champion of strife and struggle and ceaseless forward movement disclaims the slightest desire to alter the eternally fixed chiaroscuro of life. The poem provides very awkward material for anyone who wishes to draw a black-and-white contrast between Pope and Browning.

*Pisgah-Sights* first appeared in 1876. Although a large amount of characteristic work was still to come, it represents the "later" Browning. Similar expressions of acquiescence in the cosmic status quo are confined almost wholly to poems published after 1870. It is only natural, one might therefore say, that with advancing years Browning should have wearied of chasing the unattainable and should have relaxed into a benign serenity. But this simple solution of the problem is not satisfactory, for in the later period expressions of what may be called the *Pisgah-Sights* theme are mingled with precisely the same emphasis on the glory of effort which characterized his earlier work. In *Asolando* (1889), his last volume, he is no less loyal than in his youth to Andrea's cult of imperfection:

Oh, gain were indeed to see above  
Supremacy ever—to move, remove,  
Not reach—aspire yet never attain  
To the object aimed at!<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, his enthusiasm for the good endless chase remains so strong that in the Epilogue of this volume he desires to continue it even in heaven.

Furthermore, the fact that the *Pisgah-Sights* theme is rare in poems published before 1870 does not necessarily imply that it is inconsistent with the *Andrea del Sarto* theme of "Ah, but a man's reach should exceed his grasp." Mood and tone are different, but it may be shown that the basic philosophy is the same. In what is usually regarded as Browning's gospel the goal of a man's striving must never be attained in this life:

But what if I fail of my purpose here?  
It is but to keep the nerves at strain,  
To dry one's eyes and laugh at a fall,

<sup>1</sup> *Rephan*, 99-102.

And, baffled, get up and begin again,—  
So the chase takes up one's life, that's all.<sup>6</sup>

"The prize is in the process." If the chase resulted in catching anything, man would become that most pitiable of objects, a "faultless painter." Usually Browning holds out the hope that our desires, necessarily frustrated on earth, will be satisfied in heaven—"On the earth the broken arcs; in the heaven, a perfect round."<sup>7</sup> But sometimes, as we have seen, his cult of imperfection carries the nobly inconclusive pursuit clear through the gates of death.

So far as our mortal existence is concerned, at all events, we are exhorted to lead lives of dauntless activity which neither can nor should bear fruit in any final accomplishment. The nature of the goal is therefore relatively unimportant; what matters is the vigor and courage of the striving:

Let a man contend to the uttermost  
For his life's set prize, be what it will.<sup>8</sup>

Thus Browning's passion for movement protects, rather than militates against, his distaste for essential change. He has been misunderstood by those who have interpreted his gospel of action as an invitation to build a better world. Fundamentally, the world is already just what it should be—an exciting ferment of energies. Since struggle is good, evil must be struggled against; but for precisely the same reason evil must not be destroyed: "Good, see, *wants* evil." His deliberately unselective aesthetic doctrine is in keeping with his ethics. "I be creative?" The lynx-eyed corregidor in *How It Strikes a Contemporary* sets down everything he sees; Fra Lippo Lippi would have the artist

<sup>6</sup> *Life in a Love*.

<sup>7</sup> *Abt Vogler*, ix.

<sup>8</sup> *The Statue and the Bust*, 243-44.

... paint these  
Just as they are, careless what comes of it.  
God's works—paint any one, and count it crime  
To let a truth slip.<sup>9</sup>

Practically speaking, of course, life's heroic bustle must result in doing *something*. Browning regards himself as a good liberal;<sup>10</sup> the atmosphere of service and sacrifice and championship of freedom agrees with his kind heart and his active circulatory system. Noble actions performed *ad hoc*, like those of Pheidipides, Herv Riel, and Caponsacchi, provide him with favorite subjects. His liberalism, however, is restricted by the fact that all high goals are unattainable. To the very limited extent that the world needs to be improved at all, the task is to be done by taking one short, realistic, empirical step after another. This view, sensible as it may be, does not betoken any very impatient ardor for the transformation of society: no matter how many such steps one takes, one can be perfectly sure of not arriving. The one-step-at-a-time idea first appears in *Sordello* (1840), where the hero, disheartened by his failure to revive the spirit of ancient Rome, is asked

... Why count as one  
The first step, with the last step? What is gone  
Except Rome's æry magnificence,  
That last step you'd take first?—an evidence  
You were God: be man now! Let those glances  
fall!

The basis, the beginning step of all,  
Which proves you just a man—is that gone  
too?<sup>11</sup>

Barring chronological difficulties, *Sordello* could have found much the same advice in Pope's *Essay on Man*—"not to think or act beyond mankind."

One must not accept at face value many of the arguments offered in that

<sup>9</sup> *Fra Lippo Lippi*, 293-96.

<sup>10</sup> *Why I Am a Liberal*.

<sup>11</sup> *Sordello*, V, 176-82.

sinuous piece of casuistry, *Bishop Blougram's Apology* (1855). Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that Browning does not sympathize with the bishop's comparison of idealistic young Gigadibs to a steamship passenger who brings along absurdly bulky luggage all of which the angry captain throws overboard. The bishop likens himself to the experienced traveler who snugly furnishes his cabin with just the right amount of impedimenta.<sup>12</sup> The moral:

... See the world  
Such as it is,—you made it not, nor I;  
I mean to take it as it is,—and you,  
Not so you'll take it,—though you get nought  
else.<sup>13</sup>

Although the bishop perverts this teaching to base ends, the idea itself is thoroughly characteristic of Browning. Blougram may be a hypocrite, but Gigadibs himself is at fault in his reformer's passion for "chopping and changing."

It has already been granted, however, that in Browning's poetry up to about 1870 the emphasis on the good endless chase is so strong as to have convinced many readers that he is an apostle of progress and creative change. We must rely on the later poems for correction of this fallacy. *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau* (1871)<sup>14</sup> is wholly a defense of that "one-step-at-a-time" doctrine which appeared in *Sordello*. The speaker grants that his record reveals

... no novelty, creativeness,  
Mark of the master that renews the age;

but this apparent deficiency was merely the result of his ability

<sup>12</sup> *Bishop Blougram's Apology*, 100 ff.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 220-23.

<sup>14</sup> Browning's earlier disapproval of Napoleon III made him unwilling that this poem should be taken as a thoroughgoing defense of that shabby figure, but I do not see how the apologia can be interpreted in other than a wholly favorable sense.

... to perceive that God  
Knew what He undertook when He made  
things.

Ay: that my task was to co-operate  
Rather than play the rival, chop and change  
The order whence comes all the good we know.

He adds that, since good comes out of evil, complete destruction of evil would entail destruction of good.<sup>15</sup> Again the shade of Pope nods agreement, murmuring, "All partial evil, universal good."<sup>16</sup>

Whence comes that ugly but revealing phrase, "chop and change," used not only in *Pisgah-Sights* (participially) and in *Hohenstiel-Schwangau* but in other poems of the later Browning? Might it have been suggested by his friend Carlyle's fulminations against those Utilitarian "logic-choppers" who so perversely believed in the possibility of improving the world by arriving at rational conclusions? A very Carlylean passage in *Fifine at the Fair* (1872) insists that, despite the "chop and change" (again!) of unbelieving philosophy, man's religious nature remains unshaken.<sup>17</sup> From something higher than logic-chopping Elvire's husband has learned

... how from strife  
Grew peace—from evil, good—came knowledge  
that, to get  
Acquaintance with the way o' the world, we  
must nor fret  
Nor fume, on altitudes of self-sufficiency,  
But bid a frank farewell to what—we think—  
should be,  
And, with as good a grace, welcome what is—  
we find.<sup>18</sup>

Here is the pure gospel of Bishop Blougram, now espoused without the slightest reservation in favor of poor dreaming Gigadibs.

<sup>15</sup> *Prince Hohenstiel-Schwangau*, 614 ff.

<sup>16</sup> *Essay on Man*, I, 292.

<sup>17</sup> *Fifine at the Fair*, cxii.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, cix.



The relationship in Browning's thought between glorification of effort and acquiescence in things as they are is clearly shown by a passage in *Pacchiarotto* (1876). The hero is cured of his itch for reforming the world by an embarrassing adventure which convinces him that

Man's work is to labour and leaven—  
As best he may—earth here with heaven;  
'Tis work for work's sake that he's needing:  
Let him work on and on as if speeding  
Work's end, but not dream of succeeding!  
Because if success were intended,  
Why, heaven would begin ere earth ended.<sup>19</sup>

Work is a pure good in itself, but it must be carried on *as if* it were directed toward some attainable purpose. On the other hand, there must be no real hope of achievement, for the result of success would be a breaking-down of the dichotomy of earthly frustration and heavenly fruition.

Such passages show us how to interpret Browning's continued expression of the *Andrew del Sarto* theme during this later period. He writes in *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country*:

... Aspire, break bounds! I say,  
Endeavour to be good, and better still,  
And best! Success is nought, endeavour's all.  
But intellect adjusts the means to ends,  
Tries the low thing, and leaves it done, at least.

No prejudice to high thing, intellect  
Would do and will do, only give the means.<sup>20</sup>

Aspire to the heights, of course; but since success is less noble than endeavor, avoid the peril of success by confining positive action to "the low thing." The last two lines are a halfhearted attempt to scramble back to loftiness: Browning has no real fear that "the means" will be provided.

The old rabbi in *Jochanan Hakkadosh*

<sup>19</sup> *Pacchiarotto*, xxi.

<sup>20</sup> *Red Cotton Night-Cap Country*, 4015-21.

(1883) struggles to a wisdom which denies all necessity for struggle. Life, he learns, is a winepress from which gushes a delicious liquor blending good and evil, "both fruits of Paradise."<sup>21</sup> The thought repeats that of *Pisgah-Sights* (1876), and again I blush to remember my survey-course contrast between Pope and Browning.

The *Pisgah-Sights* theme provides the governing idea of the entire *Ferishtah's Fancies* volume (1884). "Be man and nothing more,"<sup>22</sup> advises the Persian sage in perfect agreement with the *Essay on Man*. If there were no pain, there would be no human pity. Why then presume to revise God's work by attempting to abolish evil?<sup>23</sup>

The same doctrine pervades *Parleyings with Certain People of Importance* (1887). Man's life, declare the Fates, must be lived as a whole, the bad with the good; it is not meant "To pick and choose from."<sup>24</sup> At least one is thankful that they have found an equivalent for "chop and change." As Dean De Vane showed long ago, Browning misinterprets Mandeville as a preacher of "Whatever is, is right" and sets him up against the querulous Carlyle.<sup>25</sup> The parleying *With Christopher Smart* repeats that "step by step" doctrine which is a corollary of the *Pisgah-Sights* theme. Nowadays, says Browning, the fashionable advice is:

Master the heavens before you study earth,  
Make you familiar with the meteor's birth

<sup>21</sup> *Jochanan Hakkadosh*, 727 ff. See also the following stanzas, which shift to the metaphor of the universe as a picture presenting just proportions of light and shadow.

<sup>22</sup> *The Family*, 70. See also the Prologue of this volume.

<sup>23</sup> *Mikrah Shah*, 104 ff.

<sup>24</sup> *Apollo and the Fates*, 242-44.

<sup>25</sup> W. C. De Vane, *Browning's Parleyings* (New Haven, 1927), chap. i.

Ere you descend to scrutinise the rose!  
I say, o'erstep no least one of the rows  
That lead man from the bottom where he plants  
Foot first of all, to life's last ladder-top.<sup>26</sup>

Here is the surest means of encouraging activity and yet avoiding that interference with the status quo which would be caused by any real determination to get to the top of the ladder. Francis Furini's sermon repeats Ferishtah's teachings on the desirability of evil—genuine evil, not merely "good disguised":

... Type needs anti-type  
As night needs day, as shine needs shade, so good  
Needs evil: how were pity understood  
Unless by pain?<sup>27</sup>

In the *Asolando* volume (1889) the old poet attempts to reassert the nobility of struggle and strife. *Development* includes a mild fling at the Wolfian school of Homer critics: "Their chop and change, unsettling one's belief";<sup>28</sup> but the passage is unimportant except for the reappearance of the favorite phrase. The rather pathetic robustiousness of *Asolando* as a whole need not cause us to revise our view of Browning's acquiescence in things as they are; for we have seen that even in the earlier poems man's heroic bustle is not expected to produce any substantial change in the divinely ordained medley of good and evil. Thus, although the Epilogue shows Browning fighting the good fight even after death,

<sup>26</sup> With Christopher Smart, viii, 78-83.

<sup>27</sup> With Francis Furini, x, 132-38.

<sup>28</sup> *Development*, 65.

we need not suppose that his endless onward drive will "chop and change" the heavenly economy.

Browning's eventually immense success as a Victorian prophet perhaps lay in his ability to combine the *Andrew del Sarto* theme and the *Pisgah-Sights* theme in a single gospel of active inactivity. By means of the former he satisfied the Victorian desire for earnest moral effort, confident vitality, progress, service, muscular drive toward "ideals." By means of the latter he soothed the Victorian dread of any really fundamental change. There was a ringing challenge to be up and doing—with no danger of disturbing the constituted order. As if they were riding a mechanical horse, his disciples could enjoy plenty of virile exercise without the disquietude of going anywhere in particular.

To attack the conventional contrast between Pope and Browning is of course not to deny that there are essential differences between them. It would be rash, though not absurd, to make any suggestion of influence. Their philosophical presuppositions are by no means the same. The romantics had transformed the chain-of-being universe into a pulsating ferment of activity. Once this ferment had cooled a little, however, the Victorian poet extracted from it an acquiescent doctrine which, though delivered in more boisterous tones, is essentially that of the *Essay on Man*. "Whatever is, is right"—"All's right with the world." Pippa and Pope seem to understand each other.

## *Literature in the Correlating Course*

HAZEL COLE SHUPP<sup>1</sup>

THE correlating course, discussed in faculty meetings periodically during the passage of years and then relegated to the realm of the ideal, regretfully by some faculty members and doubtless with relief by others, has been given a local habitation and a name of late in those institutions which have adopted in one form or another the type of program called "general education" which, its protagonists believe, is a corrective of many of the weaknesses inherent in the conventional curriculum. The program is a rebellion against the system of free electives or group electives, on the one hand, and against narrow departmentalization, on the other. It may be said, perhaps, that it is a protest against both *laissez faire* and vested interest in academic circles.

Courses in the program cut across departmental boundaries and in many colleges are required of all students. The purpose is to insure that every student, whatever his major interest or ultimate field of specialization, shall have acquaintance with all the general fields of knowledge and, more important, that he shall have had the opportunity, if that can be called opportunity which cannot be avoided, of knowing these fields before he chooses one in which he is to concentrate. The function of literature in such a program is probably no more beset with problems than is that of other subjects. It is certain that literature will gain something and lose something from cor-

relating with other subjects—as will they. It becomes the duty of the English teacher who is drafted into such a course, however, to inquire with some particularity what literature will lose, and whether the loss matters much, what it will gain, and whether it is worth gaining. The English teacher is, of course, interested in the functioning of the program as a whole, but he is also aware that it is his particular task to teach English and that, if he does not evaluate the gains and losses of a new approach to teaching it, no one else will.

Literature is a many-sided discipline. At Pennsylvania College for Women, where a curriculum of general education has been in operation long enough so that it is no longer merely a program on paper, it was evident from the first that literature might conceivably be taught as a corollary of history, of philosophy, or of the social studies. It was decided, however, that its place was in the "Arts Course," a two-year sequence required of all students in the freshman-sophomore or the sophomore-junior years, which correlates literature with work in the visual arts, music, drama, and dance. Other required courses in the program are "Human Development and Behavior," "The Natural World," "History of Western Civilization and Modern Society," and "Philosophy of Life," or organization of experience. "Correlating" and "required" are the key words, it is evident, in all these courses, and they represent a theory and practice of edu-

<sup>1</sup> Pennsylvania College for Women.

cation which make necessary many adjustments in the thinking of any instructor who is involved.

It has been remarked by every college faculty which contemplates formulating a series of correlating courses that no graduate school in existence is conditioned to equip a person for teaching any one of them in its entirety. The best that can be hoped at present for a course like the "Arts Course" is that one may find in a given faculty a person or two from each department who is not too narrow a specialist in his own art, is well versed in at least one other than his own, and is reasonably literate in all of them. He must be willing to work in the other arts, at least to the extent of being able to assimilate the amount of information about them it is expected the ordinary college student can assimilate. As the course is set up at Pennsylvania College for Women, it meets twice a week for lectures by the specialist in one art or another, and the third time in small groups for discussion, questions, and clearing up ambiguities the specialist may have left in his wake. In this third hour every instructor must direct student discussion in other arts than his own. Consequently, he attends all the lectures, meets the specialist in the current unit for briefing sessions, and does all the "home work" assigned the students. He must be interested in all the arts and reasonably intelligent in them, as well as willing to work. Indeed, it sometimes seems that he must have only one regret: that he has but one life to give to the "Arts Course."

Leaving the faculty members in the other arts to their own problems, we may concentrate on the qualifications necessary for the literature teacher in such a course, though they are not peculiar to him alone. He must not be too old, arterially at least, and he must not be so

young that he has not in his mind a large amount of material which he dares discard and from which he can cull what he needs. If he is the sort of teacher who revels in sources, classical allusions, dates, and philology, he will not be at home in the correlating course. If his interest is syllable-counting, he may correlate very well with the technical matters of the other arts, but he may at the same time sabotage the real usefulness of literature in such a course. It is much better if he has some creative interest and/or ability. It may be easier to find such a person in the department of English than in the fine arts—or it may not.

Assuming, however, that he is found, it is certain that he will be immensely stimulated by a course correlating with the other arts. It has been our experience that the faculty members have found from the association so many new implications and significances in their own art that they believe their teaching in all their courses has become fresher and more enthusiastic. If it is true, as some people believe, that good teaching is the one indispensable element in a college, this is in itself justification for attempting to organize a course in which the correlation of the arts is an objective.

Paradoxically, however, it seems that the point at which the course should begin is not with the dogma that the arts correlate but with the frank acknowledgment that they do not. For they do not, not with the exact parallels and the perfectly matching synchronization the student likes to take down in a notebook and use in a subsequent examination. The course which attempts to force correlations, to see the sonata form in the sonnet and an exact similarity between theme in painting and theme in the short story, will find itself bogged down in dishonesty or else beset with so many quali-

lying exceptions that it loses clarity and students become rebellious. In a deeper sense, of course, there is correlation of which everyone who knows more than one of the arts is aware. This awareness, however, comes from long acquaintance and from perception, not from *ex cathedra*, pontifical statements. It must be reached inductively, which is probably true of real awareness of correlation in any field.

This is not to say that certain underlying principles cannot with value be presented as common to all the arts. They all have common technical characteristics: rhythm, design, climax, unity. They are all influenced by or are an influence upon the period in which they exist or existed. They share certain historical philosophies such as classicism, romanticism, realism. They all bear marks of the impact of such idioms as impressionism and expressionism. The list might be extended indefinitely, and I do not intend to outline a course. The point is that all the arts are a record of man's experience, historically or emotionally or aesthetically, but that the devices they use and the functions they serve are different.

If one were to make a historical survey of methods of teaching literature in the last generation or so, let us say from the turn of the century, he would find that they had changed usually in response to some environmental or competitive stimulus. There was a time when teaching literature was a matter of interpretation and when the teacher was something of a creative artist. If he was a good one, his course was magnificent; if he was not good, it was sorry stuff. Then, influenced perhaps by German methods of scholarly investigation, teaching became objective: syllables were counted, variants noted, and sources compared. Still later, in compe-

tition and also in connivance with the schools of education, texts were published which did all the interpreting and made the process of teaching almost fool-proof. And now literature is in competition with the sciences and other subjects which have the reputation of being more successful in preparing for postgraduate careers. One hears the question: What can I *do* with literature when I get out?

The correlating course in the arts is not specifically an answer to this question. It is more nearly a return to the interpretative technique which has indeed never been supplanted in popular undergraduate courses. It demands that the instructor, like the professor of the earlier era, be something of a creative artist—and a good one. It is a statement that literature is an art which is to be weighed, understood, and enjoyed as the other arts are. It may or may not have vocational implications, but it may be hoped that it can give a new significance to reading and the study of reading. Perhaps the woman's college, where English is and traditionally has been a strong and popular department, is a good testing ground for the effectiveness of alliance with the other arts with such an end in view.

Alliance with the other arts means also, however, competition with them, and the course brings into focus another point of view which is not often apparent in the straight literature course and which may seem to the thoughtful English instructor to have some elements of absurdity. It is not, however, too absurd to be considered by the movie-bred college generation or, one finds, by other educators. It has indeed been promulgated and fostered by up-to-the-minute methods of teaching in secondary and grade schools, and it has advantages for the literature teacher if rightly used;



there is no doubt about it. I refer to the methods of teaching by audio-visual aids which have tended to make reading as painless as possible and which, some people fear, may with the advent of television go too far in supplanting reading as an art and a resource. Why should one take the time to read a book when he can get the story from the radio or the movies or see it on a screen in his own living-room?

The answer to this question depends in the correlating course very much on the literature instructor. He will be wise to adopt and adapt the techniques—auditory and visual and dramatic—of the other arts, but he should not be side-tracked or overpowered by their liveliness. Reading takes time, it is true—more time than seeing a moving picture or hearing a record. The literature instructor, like the believers in helpful substitutes, wishes to make reading as painless as possible; in fact, he wishes to make it delightful. But he believes that reading has rewards which cannot be supplied by mechanical devices. Else why is he an English teacher? In the correlating course he must at once make the point that literature has certain functions which the other arts do not completely share.

The most important of these, in the opinion of this instructor at least, is that literature has something to say. It is concerned with values, a term hard to define but impossible to ignore, and with ideas. It is true that all the arts have ideas, but literature is the one which presents them directly in the common idiom, in words. The other arts are inclined to be wary of what they term "the literary interpretation," particularly in the contemporary period.

Emphasis on idea content, then, seems to be the starting point of the literature

instructor in the correlating course and, indeed, his important contribution to it. It is possible to teach poetry for its rhythm, its color, and its sense appeal. It is even necessary to do so and is much better than presenting it merely as iambic pentameter or amphibrachic versus anapaestic versus dactylic hexameter. One of the advantages to literature in the correlating course is that the experience of reading poetry with all the senses can be so immediately identified with the experience of listening to music. This is good. However, poetry has ideas, or some poetry has, and the perception of an idea requires analysis and thought. It is something more than the recognition of meter and something different from emotional response; teachers may disagree as to how it is different. But they can hardly disagree that it would not be presenting the full intention of the poet to teach "Ode on the Intimations of Immortality" or "Song of Myself" or even "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" without some explanation of the idea behind it. The literature instructor may decide to include in the course only those poems where idea is not imperative and the experience most closely akin to that of the other arts; he can find examples all along the way. He has, however, to consider that this is a required course, that it is part of a program designed to give the minimum essentials of a well-rounded education to every student, and that it is for many of them the only experience of literature, outside freshman English, they will have in their entire course. He must decide whether he should choose material primarily for correlation, thus contributing to the unity of the course, or whether he should attempt to show not only how poetry is similar to the other arts but how it is different.

Poetry is closer to them than prose. But a course of this sort cannot omit prose. Most students are going to speak prose and meet prose and read prose for the rest of their lives, probably more than they are going to speak, meet, and read poetry. Here, too, the instructor must decide between the most perfect correlation, on the one hand, and the needs of the student, on the other. He can find examples which correlate perfectly; parts of *Ulysses*, for example, are as close to abstraction and thus as close to music as words can be. The instructor may doubt, however, that the passages where words are used as abstractions are for the average student of indispensable importance either as the literary contribution of the book itself or as an incentive to wide and comprehending excursions of his own in contemporary reading.

It is apparent that the two words "required" and "correlating," mentioned above as representing the keys of the general education technique, represent also the horns of the dilemma for all the instructors in the course. If it were designed only for those students who elected to take it after having had some previous experience in the arts, there would be no doubt that, the more complete the correlation, the better the course. As it is, there must be compromises. The effectiveness of the sequence, twelve hours out of the one hundred and twenty for graduation, will depend on the wisdom of the compromises, which in turn depends on the wide knowledge of the instructors and their willingness and ability to work with one another.

Compromises are not the only difficulties in the way of formulating a course of this sort. There is also the difficulty of the choosing and training, or rather the self-training, of the teaching personnel who cannot be expected to use methods

in which they do not believe but who cannot be successful if they persist in carrying over their old notes for the survey course. There are also difficulties in finding a textbook, or four textbooks, or five, in having a sufficient supply of collateral reading for a suddenly expanded demand, of providing records for each group teacher and securing slides and prints. It is not intended, however, to imply that the difficulties outweigh the advantages. One of the latter has already been mentioned: the stimulus to the faculty members, who are challenged by the experience of reevaluating and enlivening their own material. Another advantage is that, from the mere fact of the number of students who are taking the course at any given time, the arts become a subject of conversation and controversy on the campus and there is a general and lively interest in them. A feature of the course at Pennsylvania College for Women is the workshop which requires some responsive participation in the arts beyond the call of duty in lectures, assignments, and examinations. This involves attendance at a certain number of art exhibitions, plays, concerts, etc.—a sufficient number of which are available without charge—and reading from a recommended list of books which illustrate the principles set up in the lectures. It is interesting to note that, since the introduction of the "Arts Course," there has been marked increase in college appreciation of the cultural life of the city and an almost too fervent participation in campus productions—that is, in the opinion of certain departments.

Of all the subjects, art is the one which lends itself most graciously to a correlating course. The art instructor can make his points visually; by flashing twenty pictures on the screen and by showing

with his pointer the details he wishes the class to observe, he can give in as many minutes twenty examples of the point he is making. The dance instructor, too, can give a demonstration which students can see, and the drama unit can produce scenes from plays to show their art in action. To understand music, however, one must listen to it when it is played in the lecture period and also a number of times thereafter. Listening is more difficult than seeing for a person who is not trained. The literature lecture must be listened to, also, and probably should be listened to, although, as we have mentioned, some illustrative material in films should perhaps also be used. If reading is an art and if the course is to present it as an art with the other arts, the literature instructor must attempt to develop and further the ability to create images, form opinions, and find emotional release through the medium of black words on white paper. So he must talk or read, or do both, often with the aid of recordings poets have made of their own work, though the understanding of what he says or reads will depend to an extent on the condition that students have previously done assigned reading, and he cannot be sure that his best points are immediately grasped as the art instructor can.

Still, literature has some advantages which other instructors point out. Students know its vocabulary, for one thing, and there is a chance that all the other faculty members are more literate in it than in the other arts. Moreover, the student may see that reading may well be in later life the art to which he will always have access and the one on which he can most steadily depend. He knows how to read, though he may not know how to dance. And he can always find a

book, though he may not always be able to find an art exhibition.

From the point of view of the general aims and objectives of the English department, also, it is an advantage that, by virtue of its association with the other arts, the course makes it impossible that any student escape exposure to literature during two years of his college life. The freshman English course tends more and more to be a composition course, the handmaid of the whole college, or at least it is so in Denmark. Emphasis is on the investigative theme, the outline, the paragraph, grammar, punctuation, the expository method, which will be useful in other courses. It is doubtless functional that it should prepare students for the type of writing incidental to work in subsequent courses and reasonable that it should attempt to correct abuses in style acquired in ten or twelve years of grade and secondary schools. In the correlating course literature is offered for its own sake, and writing is important as the exercise of an art in which competence is necessary if one is to explain his opinions and convince others of their validity.

In addition to the usual channels of papers, notebooks, etc., opportunity for this sort of writing is provided by the reports on workshop activities which every student makes at intervals during the semester. They are a very important part of the course, perhaps more important than examinations, since they are evidence of ability to be intelligently expressive about current productions as they are related to older forms. All the teachers who meet the small groups weekly to work with them individually are unanimous in support of clear and interesting writing, considering that it represents the exercise of an art in which

the course should expect precision. It is a pity that students cannot have the occasion to practice the other arts as well as the art of writing in the course, but up to this time it has not been possible to arrange that all of them should have it. Eventually we hope that learning by doing, or attempting to do, in at least one of the arts besides writing will be part of the essential experience of the course. In the meantime it is possible that writing habits improve in the "Arts Course," where writing is considered an art and not a base invention of the grammarian, quite as rapidly as in the composition course, at least for some students.

In the course as it is now functioning, no one art is dominant. It is meant to emphasize experience in all the arts, to contribute to understanding them by developing ability to think with some precision in terms of all of them, and as a result to enjoy them more fully. It is not a survey course, or a course in aesthetics, though it has elements of both. In order to give some understanding of techniques, some historical perspective, and some tolerance and comprehension of the contemporary, four themes have been set up for the several semesters. In the first, forms and functions and some value judgments are considered. The second-semester theme is the classical temper; the third, social impulse in the arts; and the fourth, modern tendencies. Since it was first planned, the course has been revised and doubtless will be revised again. It is now in its third year; not until it has been given half-a-dozen times should we feel that there is a plan on paper of which we can say, "This definitely is the course." This much can be said of it so far: It has stimulated interest in all the arts to the advantage of each; students who were at first baffled

by the diversity of subjects presented have in the main ended by being enthusiastic about it; and we hope that it has made them better readers, better theatergoers and listeners at symphonies, better observers at art exhibitions.

Many educators are suspicious of the correlating course. That there are no instructors authoritative in all the subjects to be correlated in any one of them is justification of the suspicion. Perhaps the graduate schools will in time turn out teachers as well correlated as the courses. Or perhaps we shall see a return to, or rather in many colleges, a continuation of, the one-man course. From the point of view of the experiment at Pennsylvania College for Women, it seems that it is not so much correlation as requirement that makes the formulation of a syllabus difficult. On the other hand, one can but believe that, if the arts are as important as we think they are, the course which correlates them should not be the exclusive property of a little group of isolated aesthetes. If the syllabus is difficult to make, that does not mean it cannot be made.

It is obvious that this is a course which might as well have been called "The Humanities" as "The Arts." It covers much of the material that certain courses correlating work in the humanities cover; its approach is perhaps somewhat more on the creative side, its aim more definitely toward participation. Techniques necessarily come up for consideration in such a course. Literature by its emphasis on meaning and values can keep it from becoming too technical; the other arts can give literature a certain liveliness by the interest they arouse in the experience of "doing." Studied in a group, they can come to represent to the student phe-

nomena as significant as others with which he makes acquaintance in college; they are not to be thought of as esoteric, remote, or merely ornamental. Potentially, at least, the arts can accomplish

for the average student more in combination than they can singly. For the average student, then, the experiment seems to be justified, and literature gains more than it loses.

## *A "Logical" Approach to Composition*

HERBERT S. MICHAELS<sup>1</sup>

A MAJOR purpose of the college should be to produce graduates who are able to think realistically, independently, and humanely. Unfortunately, the composition course in many colleges is failing to do its share in directing the student toward this goal. Even the favored minority who can write precise and vivid English at the end of the freshman year often waste excellent style in the conveyance of colorless ideas that have clung to woolly minds like burdocks.

Few who have completed the first year are prepared to criticize and to create ideas during the remainder of their college careers. For this the misplaced emphasis in the composition course is partly to blame. One college sets up the rule that the omission of four necessary commas in a theme means failure, and another insists that one sentence fragment is fatal. But too few institutions advise instructors that a paper should be failed for declaring that a voter should choose Truman rather than Dewey because a man with a mustache is invariably shifty; or that the college should give a weekly wage to football players, since it now pays professors, who are obviously less important.<sup>2</sup>

The instructor frequently wails be-

cause his students are ignorant of grammar, punctuation, and spelling, but it should not be necessary to teach elementary principles in the standard composition course. Certainly admission requirements should be raised; certainly remedial classes should be established. But it is a perversion of the function of the composition teacher to make him drill the class on fundamentals for a year. The unfortunate fact is that, while college freshmen are often unprepared in the simple elements of English, they are even more abominably incapable of critical thinking.

One reason is that our educational system, at least until college, often seems to stress merely the accumulation of facts. We are all familiar with the child who can rattle off the names of the capitals and the major products of the forty-eight states but is unable to distinguish between a city and a state or to explain the industrial significance of a high steel production rate.

Another cause of muddled thinking is that, prior to college, the student has been dominated on many fronts by intellectual pressure. Many high-school students have encountered the teacher who is dogmatic because of intellectual incapacity; and those who have not agreed with him or her that the American Federation of Labor is a hotbed of radicalism

<sup>1</sup> Colby College, Waterville, Me.

<sup>2</sup> These theses are taken from student themes, of course.



or that Darwin was an irreverent fool know that courage often brings public disgrace. Too there are always a few teachers who have adopted the worst features of the Puritan tradition in education: "Don't speak until you're spoken to; don't contradict your elders; and raise your hand if you want to go to the boys' room."

In his first college year the student is intellectually free for the first time, perhaps. He is removed not only from a repressive school environment but also from the direct or indirect domination of influences outside school: father telling mother to vote Republican because great-grandmother once shook hands with Lincoln, or the girl next door declaring, "Only sissies read poetry." These are several hundred comfortable miles away.

Now we see the shiny new student in his first class, coruscant eyes fastened on the instructor as he awaits the liquid words which are to irrigate his parched mind. The instructor walks in and announces briskly: "This morning we shall begin a study of the capital letter. The capital has six major uses. . . ."

Is it any wonder that the keen young student begins a campaign of intellectual resistance at this point? Is it any wonder that after a repetition of his sixth-grade grammar work his main object in life may not be "to find out" but "to get away without doing"? How dead we kill this thing we love.<sup>3</sup>

The time then for teaching the argument, I believe, is at the very beginning of the year. This is true even if we consider this phase only for its contribution to effective expression. In marshaling facts and ideas coherently, the freshman

learns organization, which is one of the most difficult tasks he faces. And the young writer is well on his way to lucid style when he understands the importance of semantics, the futility of symbol-waving, and the necessity for consistency.<sup>4</sup>

In teaching logic the instructor should present problems which are of vital interest to the student; at the same time, these must be of more than passing significance. It is difficult to find earth-shaking importance in "Should Fraternity Pledges Be Hazed?" But "Fraternity Exclusiveness and Democracy" meets both criteria.

The instructor should create an atmosphere of investigation in the classroom, hammering always on the theme, "Question, question, and question some more." If handled carefully, this may give a comparatively clean mental slate upon which he later should be able to scratch the positive principles that aid the search for the correct.

In the hope that it may be helpful, I should like to record several of my own attempts to achieve goals suggested above.

To convince the class of its need for the work we were undertaking, I opened this phase of the course by requesting that the students write a brief comment on the Radical-Socialist party of France. Just before the papers were read to the class, the students were asked to indicate how many were sympathetic to our own Republican party. About 70 per cent replied affirmatively. But, on the basis of the name alone, sixteen of the class of twenty had vigorously attacked the Radical-Socialists as "Communitic,"

<sup>3</sup> A senior professor in a good eastern university spends the first full month of the composition course dictating rules on punctuation from a handbook.

<sup>4</sup> A paper from a recent crop: "God gives each man the free will to be honored or disgraced according to God's wish."

"visionary," "wildly revolutionary." Two had refused to comment because of lack of information. Two others had correct information. The discovery that the Radical-Socialist party is one of France's most conservative groups came as a semantic bombshell to the class, making it clear to many for the first time that it is the thing rather than the word-for-the thing which counts, as Stuart Chase points out in *The Tyranny of Words*.

Before reading an article on propaganda<sup>5</sup> and studying textbook material on fallacies, the students wrote essays in which they attempted to persuade an unbeliever to accept an important idea. Among the titles were "Social Security Should Be Abolished"; "Intercollegiate Football Aids Education"; "We Need a Woman President"; etc. These themes were held until various textbook exercises on fallacies had been thoroughly discussed in class. Then the students were asked to write critical papers evaluating their own arguments. This served the double purpose of giving them exercise in the use of recently acquired tools of logic and of giving the instructor an opportunity to determine how effective the inoculation of reason had been.

Following class analysis of various types of fallacy, we began applying theory to life about us, to demonstrate how logic can help the individual to make a happier adjustment to his environment and to make a more valuable contribution to society.

As part of this program, the class was discussing various beliefs about people of other countries, races, and religion when a student volunteered the statement that the slightest amount of Negro "blood" in an otherwise lily-white family

could result in the birth of an ebony child. Asked his source, the student produced a "popular" magazine devoted to the development of a finer America by the building-up of muscles and the promotion of nostrums for the restoration of virility.

There began immediately a heated discussion of the validity of the source, with several students defending the magazine, even though the mentioned statement was the most temperate of the absurdities.<sup>6</sup> To cap our discussion we wrote to the editor, asking him to furnish proof of his generalizations. The letter we received a week later was so obviously evasive that the class howled in derision. I felt that the experiment had indeed been a success when the student whose statement had set off the discussion went on his own initiative in search of authoritative material, gleaned refutations of the article's statements from sources such as Otto Klineberg's *Race Differences*.

Other materials close at hand were analyzed. The class searched through advertisements, studying their honesty or dishonesty and arriving at some understanding also of the psychology of persuasion. Mimeographed portions from Hitler's *Mein Kampf* were used to advantage. Editorials from the college newspaper and professional journals were explored for defective or logical reasoning. In 1948, an election year, the college tape recorder brought political speeches into the classroom for discussion. At critical points segments of the speeches were replayed for further analysis.

It seems to me that, once an attitude of inquiry is instilled by examination of

<sup>5</sup> Institute for Propaganda Analysis, "How To Detect Propaganda," *Propaganda Analysis*, Vol. I, No. 2 (November, 1937), pp. 1-4.

<sup>6</sup> The article asserted, for example, that offspring of interracial marriages are sickly, unable to reproduce, and die in their twenties.

such material encountered in and after college, the positive methods of investigation can be taught easily. The instructor who can teach the objective, realistic examination of ideas to his students will be doing much more than laying the

foundation for perceptive study throughout college. Actually he may very well be giving to the student criteria which will help him to make intelligent decisions in a world that is savage and complex but not hopeless.

## On "On Jargon"

ROBERT J. GEIST<sup>1</sup>

As a freshman I frequently wrote awkward sentences in my themes, sentences I knew to be awkward before the instructor scrawled a huge "Awkward" or "Clumsy" across them. Completely baffled in my attempts to revise them, I found Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch's "Interlude: On Jargon" a revelation; at last I could get hold of something definite in those sentences, something that was a key to the needed revision. Six years later, full of enthusiasm for the essay, I first set out to teach it to a freshman class—in fact, four freshman classes. My enthusiasm so far exceeded my understanding that, when those four classes finished with me, I could find nothing wrong with the word *case* except that it sounded like the German word for cheese.

Conversations with other instructors have convinced me that I was not and am not alone in finding Quiller-Couch's essay full of pitfalls for the unwary instructor. A distinguished Oxford professor finds his reputation and the lecture platform sufficient guaranty against objections from his audience; an undistinguished American instructor has no such safeguard from his handful of un-

selected listeners. Convinced that "Jargon" is the greatest single essay on the art of writing, I would like to point out some of the objections.

In general, most students, if they react at all, react antagonistically; and for this antagonism Quiller-Couch is at least in part responsible. He is not, of course, responsible for the natural antagonism many students feel toward criticism of so essential a part of their makeup as style; they sometimes feel too strongly that the style is the man, and hence the man is being criticized; but Quiller-Couch is responsible for the antagonism wrought by one who is too positive in his statements, one who does not practice what he preaches, one who loses track of his real point in order to be humorous. Of *with regard to* and *in respect of*, Quiller-Couch says, "I say it is not enough to avoid them nine times out of ten, or ninety-nine times out of a hundred. You should never use them." The average freshman is likely to resent this unyielding condemnation of some of his favorite locutions. Furthermore, when the freshman reads that elegant variation is a favorite trick of jargon, he wonders just what he has hold of when Quiller-Couch says, "Here again is a string, a concatenation—say, rather, a tiara of gems of purest ray serene from

<sup>1</sup>Michigan State College. Co-author, with Richard A. Summers, of *Current English Composition* (Rinehart, 1951).

the dark unfathomed caves of a Scottish newspaper." Thomas Gray means little enough to the student; for him Quiller-Couch is merely indulging in a flux of words to the pen. Again, the student reads that jargon "dallies with Latinity," only to find, a few pages later, that Quiller-Couch suggests closing "our *florilegium*." Nor is Latinity all. *Logos*, in Greek characters, leaves the student cold, or infuriated at this professor who has constantly used the jargon of his profession—poetical quotation and foreign words. Most antagonizing of all perhaps is Quiller-Couch's obscuring the real point in order to be humorous. The second vice of jargon, we are told, is the use of "vague woolly abstract nouns"—like *case*, *instance*, *character*, *nature*, *condition*, *persuasion*, *degree*. It is essential for the student to keep in mind that these words are objectionable because they are vague woolly abstract nouns, but Quiller-Couch immediately leads the reader away from vagueness and woolliness by saying, or implying, that *case*, jargon's dearest child, is objectionable because its Latin ancestor did not mean what vague woolly abstract *case* does mean—*situation*, *circumstance*, *instance*. Obviously, the ancestral meaning of a word is not the criterion by which we judge its present meaning, but, by inaccurately supposing that *case* can only mean *container*, Quiller-Couch achieves the mildly amusing: "then try how, with a little trouble, you can extricate yourself from that *case*," and the hilarious: "Poor Mr. Cox! left gasping in his aquarium." I do not object to the undeniable humor in the gasping Mr. Cox, though students frequently fail to find it funny; but it is essential to recognize that the humor is actually beside the point and detracts from the idea that *case* is objectionable because it is a vague woolly abstract noun. The person who wrote

"in the case of Mr. Harold Cox" did not mean or say that Mr. Cox was in a container; and the reader does not interpret that Mr. Cox was in one, aquarium or otherwise. The writer did say that Mr. Cox was in a case, a situation—which in effect says nothing and leaves the reader to interpret whether Mr. Cox did not weep or was not wept for. I should certainly not wish to delete Sir Arthur's antagonizing sins from the essay; they give the essay flavor. I believe, however, that these sins should be written large for the student; in fact, I happily agree with the students in finding fault with Quiller-Couch and make our agreement a means to understand his essential point.

The instructor must, of course, seek to counteract the student's antagonism whenever it interferes with the essential point. Thus upon reading, "The first [vice of jargon] is that it uses circumlocution rather than *short straight speech*," some antagonized student inevitably doesn't want to use short, straight, simple speech all the time; it's childish. Well, what is the difference between the simplicity of childhood and the simplicity of maturity, the simplicity of writing like Swift's? Like Quiller-Couch, we fall back on illustration. A first-class jargonist once wrote in a theme on modern methods of teaching:

Now let us ask what the effects of the emphasis upon the influence of environment are.

About one in fifty freshmen fathoms the meaning of the sentence; yet the writer had a definite idea, and each word adds meaning. The sentence very clearly has the simplicity of childhood—and the incomprehensibility. The verbs *let*, *ask*, and especially *are* could hardly be simpler; and the series of prepositional phrases has the simplicity of a chain—

perhaps a concatenation. The revised sentence reads:

Now let us ask how emphasizing the influence of environment affects modern teaching.

The sentence is immediately clear—short, straight, simple—but the grammatical simplicity of the childish sentence has given way to grammatical complexity. Since a gerund (*emphasizing*) used as subject and taking an object is in the language, not to be analyzed by grammarians, but to express more precisely the logical relation between sentence elements, the grammatical complexity of the revised sentence creates a simplicity and directness not found in the original sentence, the simplicity and directness of the mature writer.

Regarding the second vice of jargon—the use of the already-mentioned vague woolly abstract nouns—we can avoid trouble with Quiller-Couch's illustrations only if we keep clearly in mind that *case* and the others are objectionable as general abstract nouns that cover the intended meaning without stating it precisely. We have already cited the misleading reference to Latin *casus*; Quiller-Couch's second example is also somewhat beside the point:

[From a cigar-merchant.] In any case, let us send you a case on approval.

Slight analysis is sufficient to make clear that the fault lies in the repetition of a word in two entirely different meanings. Here the word repeated happens to be *case*; but repetition, not meaning, is at fault. Even Quiller-Couch would not object to the second *case*, a container for cigars. The first *case* is obviously the vague woolly abstract *case*, but it is precisely what the writer wants. He wishes to be as vague, broad, and general as possible in order that you will let him send you cigars on approval. If one tries to avoid this *case*, one can only resort to

synonymous expressions: *under any circumstances, in any event, no matter what, whatever the situation*. One may prefer these synonyms, but one must recognize that whenever a writer wishes to be general or vague, he may legitimately use a vague woolly abstract noun. It seems to me essential that this legitimate use of *case* be pointed out.

Perhaps a word of caution is in order regarding Quiller-Couch's suggested correction for his fourth illustration:

Even in the purely Celtic areas only in two or three cases do the Bishops bear Celtic names.

For "cases" read "dioceses."

This correction, fitting enough in the sentence, suggests the hunt for synonyms, but a vague woolly abstract noun like *case* rarely lends itself to so concrete a synonym as *diocese*. Rather, as Fowler points out:

There is some danger that, as writers become aware of the suspicions to which they lay themselves open by perpetually using *case*, they may take refuge with *instance*, not realizing that most instances in which *case* would have damned them are also cases in which *instance* will damn them.<sup>2</sup>

Hunting synonyms for vague woolly abstract nouns, then, is dangerous, and I rather suspect that when the writer of this fourth example wrote *cases* he did not intend or mean *dioceses*. He pretty clearly meant two or three bishops. "Even in the purely Celtic areas only two or three Bishops bear Celtic names." This use of general abstract nouns as mere padding without necessarily destroying meaning is, of course, extremely common. "In most cases working students get help from home," to take a recent freshman example. Quiller-Couch's next example: "In most instances the players were below their form," probably illustrates the same point.

<sup>2</sup> *Dictionary of Modern English Usage*, p. 277.



Students often object to the censure cast upon the amusing sentence: "He was conveyed to his place of residence in an intoxicated condition." One will do well to recognize that this expansiveness does lend itself to humor, but, to carry a straightforward message, "He was carried home drunk." In order to be humorous, moreover, an expansive passage is best set off against a simple direct back-

ground, as Quiller-Couch's concatenation—say, rather, a tiara—itself illustrates.

The essay ends fittingly with a forceful idea forcefully expressed—but marred in the freshman mind by *perpend* and *logos*. Let me end with the reminder that I criticize Quiller-Couch's essay only because I consider it invaluable to the student who understands it.

## *The Partner Method of Review at the Air Command and Staff School*

RAY C. MAIZE<sup>1</sup>

THE Air Command and Staff School, a component of the Air University which was established in 1946 for the professional education of selected Air Force officers, has long recognized the need for instruction and practice in writing. Senior Air Force officers had indicated dissatisfaction with the quality of writing in military correspondence, regulations, directives, reports, and manuals. They expressed the feeling that some kind of training in language skills should be included in the curriculum of the school as a part of the program to train field-grade officers for command or staff positions in wing, group, or numbered Air Force headquarters.

But the problem of how to implement such a program became immediately complex. It included not only what such a program should contain but also who should teach it, supervise it, and correct student efforts. Any college-level course in composition, for example, would require one instructor for approximately every thirty students, but the military

personnel could not provide for such a trained staff within its own ranks. To hire an equivalent civilian staff would involve budgetary allowances beyond fulfillment. The Command and Staff School had a Communication Techniques Section consisting of only two officers to assume the responsibility for this problem. They were told to prepare plans for including in the training schedule sufficient instruction in written expression to meet the needs of an Air Force officer. This instruction was then to be given to the class of officers to be processed through the school in June, 1950.

The situation which confronted the Section was difficult. The class consisted of 480 field-grade officers whose educational background ranged from high school to graduate school. Their average age was thirty-two; their average military experience was eight years. During their stay at the Command and Staff School they would spend an intensive five and a half months of study of military subjects related to their duties as Air Force officers. For these men the Communication Techniques Section had

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to recommend what kind of instruction in written expression should be provided, what method of instruction should be used, what amount of time should be allotted out of the entire curriculum, and what provisions should be made for editing and correction of student work.

An analysis of complaints about officer writing revealed that meaning was obscured by lengthy sentences, unusual words, military jargon, indirect phrasing, and complex sentence structure. Problem-solving, as related to logical thinking, needed emphasis. Grammar, punctuation, and spelling were negligible in importance to these other considerations. In view of these findings, the Section decided that:

1. Writing is a process for the communication of meaning.
2. To communicate meaning, the writer uses words and combinations of words as symbols of his thinking.
3. The writer cannot communicate successfully until he understands the effects of these symbols upon the reader. To learn the role of a reader, he must learn to analyze, criticize, and correct his own work and that of other students.
4. To be readable, writing should be simple, direct, and concise. It should contain familiar words and easy sentence construction.
5. Grammar should be functional to meaning and stressed only as needed to convey idea.

Accepting these premises, the Section had to decide how best to teach the material. They discarded the idea of setting up a series of workbook exercises, modeled after those now on the commercial market and used by many colleges and universities. They decided not to establish classes in composition which would analyze the best writers as a model and require writing about artificially created situations. Instead, the Section decided that writing itself should be functional to all the courses given in the school and that, aside from a few lectures on the general principles of good writing, no

other formalized instruction should be provided. The student would be asked to write solutions to school problems which had been made as realistic as possible. For example, after five hours of committee discussion of typical problems of an Air Force group commander, the students were asked to write a report of the proceedings and to prepare directives, regulations, and correspondence necessary to implement decisions made during the conference. In similar manner other opportunities were found to include writing as a practical part of the curriculum.

Even more troublesome was the problem of how to correct and edit student writing so that the learning process would be complete. With approximately five hundred students in a class and a section of only two officers to handle the load, any idea of conducting composition instruction in a fashion similar to that used in civilian colleges and universities had to be discarded. It was humanly impossible for these two men to correct and comment upon each individual's efforts, and it was equally impossible to hire a civilian staff for such a purpose. The entire program might have to be canceled as just a good idea someone once had.

Then the "partner" method of review was conceived. If a faculty could not be recruited for the job, why not have a fellow-student review and edit the writing of his partner? His paper, in turn, would receive the same attention. With preliminary instruction of six hours of lecture on the general subject of communications, these students had at least a background for criticism. Their military experiences were common enough to warrant an intelligent approach to logical thinking on the content. Even if these men had no training in recognition

of mechanical mistakes, what better learning process than to motivate them to find these mistakes in papers written by someone else? The proofreading they had to perform on other's writing, it was reasoned, should carry over to their own work. What is more, as officers in command of other officers, much of their work in composition would be of a supervisory nature, entailing criticism or re-writing of efforts by juniors. The "partner" method, then, would serve many purposes, in addition to solving the immediate problem of how to edit and comment upon student composition efforts.

Thus the organization was complete. Guest lecturers recruited from civilian universities provided the students and faculty of the school with the theories of Rudolph Flesch as expressed in *The Art of Plain Talk* and *The Art of Readable Writing*. John McElroy of Readability Associates was employed by the Air University to lecture and to prepare a handbook containing his essential views, which were similar to but more simplified than those of Flesch. The students were then organized into teams of partners who, after a written assignment growing out of the school situation, were given scheduled time to work together on each other's paper.

Three possibilities of the partner review method are allowed: (a) using the conference method, wherein partners meet and jointly edit or criticize each other's papers; (b) using the individual method, wherein partners work separately and do not confer on each other's comments and corrections; and (c) using a combination of the conference and individual method, wherein the initial review is made separately, after which the partners meet and confer on the comments and corrections made during the initial review.

Once the partner review is concluded, the paper is returned to the original writer for complete revision. He then submits both his first and his final draft to the school for further action. The Communication Techniques Section, now augmented by a civilian adviser, makes a random sampling of the class work and from that sampling prepares a mimeographed report to the students of the most important deficiencies and acceptable corrections for them. These reports supplement an offset-printed handbook of some forty pages which contains such instruction as how to conduct the partner review, how to edit and criticize copy, how to distinguish ineffective writing, how to obtain economy in word expression, how to write a staff report, and how to obtain readable writing. In such a manner the student officers receive contemporary comment on their writing efforts to remind them of basic principles and also to add additional information not obtainable otherwise.

One other corrective measure has been suggested. The Section, after study of student responses to problem situations, plans to collect evidence of difficulties and present them visually, using slide projector and bellopticon, before the class. Fortunately school facilities are extensive enough to provide for these visual aids, but the important point is that the aids will be used with maximum learning effect.

How effective has the program been to date? Motivation for this work is easy, for the officers, out of their experience and background, recognize the need for a practical writing course. They *want* to learn and are quick to ask questions. While the writing and reviewing processes are being conducted on scheduled time, the Communication Techniques staff make themselves available to ad-

wise and help. They are kept busy. What is more, they find considerable attention and application among the students, who actively assist each other and learn from each other. The papers, when they are turned in for analysis, show detailed proofreading (certainly more than the usual college English instructor can supply). If one reviewer makes an incorrect criticism, he is called to account by the writer, who wants to contest his view. In partnership they thrash out their differences, and, if they cannot be resolved, the students come to the staff for decision.

This is not to say that the partner method of review is infallible or that it is a panacea to replace editing and criticism by the instructor. Originally conceived as the only method of review possible to meet the needs of the Air Command and Staff School, it has proved to be satisfactory in meeting those needs. But the method has some recognizable weaknesses. As a method, it needs to be taught. It cannot be expected to work perfectly from the start without careful observation and correction. Student editing must be learned by stages of experience. The blunders of early efforts should be anticipated so that disappointments do not outweigh learning values.

Furthermore, the partner method is for review purposes and should not be considered as a replacement for writing instruction. Other techniques should be employed to develop writing skills; the partner method should develop critical analysis of and individual sensitivity to writing problems. Any tendency to allow partner review to substitute for the instructor in writing should be guarded against as shortsighted. The review period should be preceded each time by a careful briefing as to purpose and followed by a skilful analysis of student

progress, all of this to be performed by the instructor.

One other weakness deserves mention. The student may ask for individual attention from the instructor whom he recognizes as an expert. His objection will be that his fellow-student is not capable of criticizing his writing and that only the instructor is qualified to point out strengths and weaknesses. This objection must be met by explaining that the partner method is in itself a learning process. By viewing analytically the product of somebody else, the writer returns to his own task of revision with increased mastery of the process of communication. If the instructor alone performs the criticism, then only the instructor profits from the experience, and he is the one who by his training is least in need of that experience. All writers must revise and rewrite; they must *learn* to revise and rewrite by doing just that over and over again.

What, then, are the learning outcomes? The student writes, knowing that his product will be read and criticized by an associate, who thus provides a suitable audience. Then the act of reviewing, of proofreading, and of editing gives each student the experience he needs to apply to his own work and also to the work of others who will be submitting writing to him in the future. Finally, he gets a clearer view of the purpose of writing as a means of communication; and if that point is made, then grammar and mechanics assume their proper place as signposts toward understanding. Composition, then, ceases to exist as a drill subject of endless monotony and assumes its rightful status as a skill involving problem-solving, organization, thought-processes, and exposition of idea. As such it is stimulating to teach and stimulating to learn.

## Current English Forum

HAROLD B. ALLEN, ADELINE C. BARTLETT, MARGARET M. BRYANT (*chairman*), ARCHIBALD A. HILL, JAMES B. McMILLAN, KEMP MALONE, RUSSELL THOMAS

### THE PLACING OF ONLY IN THE SENTENCE

Occasionally there are such marked cleavages between written and colloquial usage that a student of the American language is harassed by doubts when it becomes necessary for him to decide which to use. The placing of the adverb *only* in the sentence will serve as an illustration of my point. Such expressions as Henry James's *I can only find out by asking him*, where the adverb precedes the verb and not the phrase it modifies, are characteristic of colloquial English. In written usage, on the other hand, this "misplacing" of *only* is much less frequent, even in journalistic prose and in the dialogue of plays and novels.

Unlike the adjective, the adverbial modifier may be placed elsewhere in the sentence than directly in connection with the word or phrase it limits. This is done variously for the sake of emphasis, clarity, or sentence rhythm. It is undoubtedly the meaning of the word and the fact that it is often used for emphasis that has called particular attention to the position of *only* in the sentence. The *Oxford English Dictionary* records:

*Only* was formerly often placed away from the word or words which it limited: this is still frequent in speech, where the stress and pauses prevent ambiguity. . . .

Leonard writes that this word order is established in American usage, and Margaret Bryant attributes the origin of such word order to analogy, to the familiar sentence pattern of subject, adverbial modifier, verb, and object as *He really wants the candy*. She says:

This pattern tends to be followed even when the adverb does not logically refer to the verb as in *He only had one left*. . . .<sup>1</sup>

However, I feel that this "misplacing" of *only* is also due to the very nature of colloquial usage; in the act of voicing a thought a speaker does not have the time, as Fowler puts it, to consider "which is the precise part of the sentence strictly qualified by it, and then put it there—this whether there is any danger or none of the meaning's being false or ambiguous."<sup>2</sup>

In other words, the colloquial "misplacing" of *only* is justified by historical usage, by analogy, and by the very nature of the spoken language, which does not allow an individual the time to make nice distinctions in word order.

However, the ambiguity which has already been mentioned in connection with the "misplacing" of *only* deserves some discussion. Miss Bryant writes:

Theoretically [*only*] should immediately precede the word it modifies, but usually it is to be found before the verb, even if it actually modifies some later word in the sentence. Thus, *She only came for the dance* should mean that she came for nothing else except the dance, but as the sentence reads it implies that she did nothing else but come. Sometimes this misplacing of *only* can cause confusion. . . .<sup>3</sup>

There is actually very little chance of ambiguity arising in spoken usage, where "stress and pauses," or "nucleus tone," makes quite clear the word or group of words which *only* modifies. Palmer gives phonetic transcriptions of one sentence to indicate this:

<sup>1</sup> Margaret M. Bryant, *Modern English and Its Heritage* (New York: Macmillan Co., 1948), p. 267.

<sup>2</sup> H. W. Fowler, *Modern English Usage* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1940), *only*, adv.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 251.



ai ounli sɔ: mai frend| jestədi.  
 ai ounli sɔ: mai frend| jestədi.  
 ai ounli sɔ: mai| frend| jestədi.  
 ai ounli sɔ: mai frend| jestədi.<sup>4</sup>

In written usage—apart from phonetic transcription—one cannot convey stress, pause, or tone. At poor best, word order is used as a substitute for these devices to make clear the intention of the writer. It is for this reason that the schoolmaster has spoken of the ambiguity that can arise when a modifier is separated too widely from the word it limits. In the sentence used by Palmer above, a different meaning is implied by the “nucleus tone” of each spoken expression. By means of this tone, the word group that *only* modifies is made clear. In written English, however, there certainly might be ambiguity about the exact intention of one who wrote *I only saw my friend yesterday*. Certainly, it would not immediately suggest—as does the third transcription above by means of tone—that the writer means “I saw my friend yesterday—not anyone else.” To a great degree, it is on the basis of this ambiguity—sometimes real, sometimes fancied—that the schoolmaster has made an issue about the correct placing of *only* in the sentence.

Rigid and unimaginative pedanticism has aroused the objection of many writers. With specific reference to *only*, Fowler writes:

illogicalities & inaccuracies of expression tend to be eliminated as a language grows older . . . the pedants who try to forward it when the illogicality is only apparent or the inaccuracy of no importance are turning English into an exact science or an automatic machine. . . .<sup>5</sup>

Despite such objections, however, written usage as exhibited in representative writers of America during the first half of the twentieth century shows definite signs of schoolmastering. There is generally great care observed in placing *only* next to the words that it should modify. It has been

suggested that such correctness is due to the efforts of editors. I do not think that it can be entirely true that such writers as Henry James or Eugene O'Neill, Robert Frost or Ernest Hemingway, men who are conscious stylists, would permit any extensive tampering with the word order of their sentences. But, even supposing that such tampering did exist, the fact remains the same—that the written language shows signs of having been schoolmastered with regard to the placing of *only*.

Only 14 per cent of the examples collected from these sources shows the use of the colloquial idiom of placing *only* before the verb when it modifies some other part of the sentence. The other 86 per cent of the examples shows more formal usage, where *only* is very carefully placed before the words it modifies. One must admit that in many of these sentences, the “correct” position is the only one possible as they are phrased—e.g., *only* could hardly be placed before the subject in a contracted form such as . . . *she'll only in her own way work on him*. . . . The result, nonetheless, is that in the written language in America one finds a preponderance of examples where *only* is placed next to the sentence element it modifies.

In *The Awkward Age* Henry James has written a novel almost entirely in dialogue. Therefore, we might assume that colloquial idioms would be preponderant. This is not the case. Although there are examples of the “misplacing” of *only*, such as

“Ah, I only mean a sovereign here and there.”

“I can only go on with her in that spirit. . . .”

James more frequently, even in his dialogue, is very careful about the placing of the adverb:

“She wants me, not any more, to see only with her eyes.”

“Let it be only between you and me.”

“There are only one or two things I want to live for. . . .”

She waited only a minute. . . .

<sup>4</sup> H. E. Palmer, *A Grammar of Spoken English* (Cambridge: Heffer & Sons, Ltd., 1939), p. 186.

<sup>5</sup> Fowler, *loc. cit.*

Actually the percentage of the examples of colloquial usage in James is high—23 per cent—in comparison to that occurring in most of the other authors studied. Only Faulkner and Hemingway match this.

In three plays by O'Neill only 17 per cent of the examples found were of the colloquial usage. All the others, even though the quotations are principally from the lines of characters who would use the colloquial levels of speech, exhibit the formality of written usage, as

LONG: I wants to convince yer she was on'y a representative of 'er classs.

EBEN: It was on'y arter she died I come to think o' it.

CABOT: Ye'd hev on'y t'ask it. . . .

Despite the general colloquial flavor of his novels, John O'Hara's usage, too, shows very few examples of the "misplacing" of *only*. There are a few passages in dialogue where this occurs:

"Well, you only had breakfast an hour ago."

"Then the others will think I only have a pint and go easy."

But the following quotations indicate his more usual practice:

Ed, of course, said he'd be only too glad to get some good champagne. . . .

He heard a sound that could mean only one thing. . . .

You could get home only moderately late for supper.

Dialogue in written usage reflects the schoolmastering that formal English has undergone more than it does the influence of the colloquial language. Faulkner writes: "When Doom died, it took only three days." But, when *speaking*, even educated speakers are apt to use the colloquial idiom and might convert the phrase above to *it only took three days*. Whether the growing protest against too rigid rules for the placing of *only* and the growing consciousness that the written usage does not in any great measure reflect spoken usage will bring about a relaxing of the formality of written English is something I cannot predict. Certainly, at the moment, written usage here is far more precise and careful than colloquial usage.

GLADYS D. HAASE

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### *Grants for Summer Study of Linguistics*

The committee on the language program of the American Council of Learned Societies can offer a limited number of small study-aid grants to United States citizens who plan to study linguistics at 1951 summer sessions of American universities. Applications will be considered from teachers in colleges or universities proposing to include linguistics materials in their course offerings, staff members of libraries or museums and government research personnel who have discovered a need for knowledge of linguistics; those preparing to go into linguistics study, teaching, or research; and advanced graduate students of high competence who contemplate moving into the linguistics field. Minimum requirements for application are at least second-year graduate status, need of financial assistance, primary concern with the social sciences or the humanities, and United States or Canadian citizenship. Application must be completed by May 1. For forms and information write: American Council of Learned Societies, 1219 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C.

## Round Table

### INTEGRATION: THE COLBY PLAN

On all college campuses there is always a certain amount of criticism that a student takes individual courses, such as German, physics, economics, etc., without any attempt to relate them one to another. In an attempt to meet this general criticism, and to enhance Colby's educational program, President Bixler appointed a committee to study a plan which was brought forward by a group of faculty members and students in the fall of 1949. Specifically the plan consisted of the adoption of one book to be read during the academic year by all students and faculty, purely on a voluntary basis. The work of the committee was to choose a book and to devise ways and means of using this book in the various courses without giving special credit for it. The intent of the plan is to have the book discussed in class and in groups, whenever the work of the particular course should touch upon ideas presented in the book. In so doing, it was felt that the student would get as many analyses of the book as he had courses, as presumably each instructor would relate the pertinent parts of the book to the course material. In effect the plan is an honest attempt at what might be called "educational integration." In no sense is it to be considered an artificial and isolated attempt at analysis of the book itself.

Let us turn for a moment to a consideration of the factors which the committee, composed of faculty and student members, used in choosing the book. In the first place, the book should be one which cuts across as many fields of knowledge as possible, so that it can be adapted to use in any of the courses offered in the curriculum. Second, it must of course be a book which is authoritative, timely, and one which is not too difficult reading. Finally, it must be one which is in print and, if at all possible,

available in an inexpensive reprint so that its purchase can be made by everybody concerned.

The book that was chosen to initiate what we have called the "All-College Reading Project" was Lecomte du N  oy's *Human Destiny*, and, although there were some doubts expressed as to the merit of this choice, it proved to be one which served our purpose admirably. Our fear that the book was perhaps too controversial and that because some of the scientific data were inaccurately set forth by Du N  oy, it might be unsuitable, proved to be groundless, for differences of opinion over some of the scientific findings only served to make the classroom discussions all the more lively. The very nature of the book, then, presented a challenge, for it not only provoked interesting and enlightening group discussions but led to a good deal of further study on the part of the faculty and students in the fields of science, religion, philosophy, education, history, and others. This is what we mean by relating one course to another, or "educational integration." The plan proved successful enough the first year to warrant its enthusiastic continuance and wholehearted acceptance.

Let us look briefly at the measure of success we attained in the first year's use of the project. One of the most tangible evidences of success was the fact that the college bookstore sold over 264 copies of the book, which is available in an inexpensive reprint. It goes without saying that many of the books sold were read by more than one student. This does not take into account the extensive use of the library's copies. To achieve this marked success in our first year's reading project, we used all available means of publicity, including radio and newspaper, and of course it was advertised by word of mouth. The co-operation of all teaching members of

the faculty in using the book for classroom discussion was of paramount importance in "putting over" the plan.

One of the most valuable results of such a program has been the intellectual stimulation on the part of the student. Education is the training of a student's mind. It is the development of his ability to think clearly, to present his own views, and to back them up by logical and reasoned arguments. The lively debates and discussions provoked by reading of this book, and by the very nature of its content, promoted just this type of training. My conversations with many of the students about their reactions to the project have convinced me that they had realized from a reading and a discussion of the book an enhanced ability to think clearly and constructively.

Now for this academic year, 1950-51, the committee has chosen Professor Harry Overstreet's *The Mature Mind*, which is proving to be another excellent choice. It must be remembered that one of the requirements of the book chosen is that its content will lend itself to pertinent discussion in as many of the courses in the curriculum as possible. Both of the titles that we have used meet this standard admirably. Dr. Overstreet, who is a distinguished psychologist, as well as a leader in the adult education movement, has set forth very clearly the criteria for a mature mind, the development of which is a process which continues throughout life. His simplicity of style and presentation should not establish it as an easy or inconsequential book, for it is packed with a great deal of valuable and essential material which merits the careful study of all educators and students.

In closing, let me quote President Bixler's comment on this reading project: "An inquiry into a problem of this type might well be used to bring out the essential unity of the life of learning underneath the apparently scattered quality of its aims. If our students can be helped to see that the world of diverse intellectual interests is after all one, they may realize that back of our com-

peting nationalisms there is also a commonness of aim which can and must be brought out."

JAMES HUMPHRY III

LIBRARIAN, COLBY COLLEGE LIBRARY  
WATERVILLE, MAINE

### MAINTAINING STANDARDS OF ENGLISH IN ALL COLLEGE COURSES

The problem of maintaining standards of English in all courses is one that exists at every university and college. The number of inquiries received from deans and special committees indicates that an explanation of our approach to this problem at the University of Texas would be welcome.

Since 1912 the university has had a standing Committee on Students' Use of English to administer a general requirement, legislated in 1911, that all candidates for the Bachelor's degree must show "an ability to write clear and correct English." The establishment of this requirement has been discussed by Professor R. A. Law in the *Nation*, XCIV (1912), 461-62. As illuminating as the history of the committee's work might be, only current procedures can be dealt with here. In general, changes in procedure have been brought about by an ever increasing enrolment, which has multiplied the difficulties of administration.

The committee still operates under the legislation of 1911, which has since been but slightly altered. This legislation granted the committee the power to inspect all kinds of written work, to prescribe appropriate remedial study, to decide when deficiencies have been removed, and to prevent the graduation of any student who fails to demonstrate his ability to the satisfaction of the committee. The same act asserted that it was the duty of the faculty, in addition to reflecting the student's English in his grades, to report seriously defective students to the committee and to submit samples of their writing. The distinction between "defective" and "clear and correct" English was left to the judgment of the committee and

the faculty, and no attempt has been made to fix standards objectively. In actual practice there is little room for disagreement about whether a given paper exhibits serious weaknesses.

The membership of the committee is fairly representative of the university as a whole; this year there are eleven members from the college of arts and sciences, two each from business administration and engineering, and one each from education, fine arts, law, and pharmacy. The work of the committee may be divided into two phases: (1) discovering students defective in English and (2) providing suitable instruction for such students.

Methods of discovery such as sampling the English of every senior or obtaining an impromptu theme from seniors who have fallen below a C average in their English grades have had to be abandoned because of the pressure of numbers. Weak students, moreover, should be discovered before their term of graduation so that they may have time to make up their deficiencies. The committee now relies on the faculty to report students who need help. It is presumed that the presentation of the required twelve semester hours in English, six in composition on the freshman level and six in literature on the sophomore level, is evidence of "an ability to write clear and correct English." But many who have the ability and can demonstrate it when put on guard are not in the habit of exercising it, particularly if they suppose that their instructors are indifferent to how they express themselves. In order to discover weak students early in their academic careers and to promote the habitual use of good English in all courses, the committee began in 1948 a more active program of encouraging the faculty to challenge poor or careless writers.

As in the past, a student may be reported to the committee at any time during the term, though as a matter of fact not many are. Immediately before the period of final examinations, the committee now sends out a notice calling attention to the duty of the faculty "to give due weight in making up

of grades to the students' use of English, and to report promptly to the Committee, submitting the evidence, any student whose use of English is seriously defective." (This is quoted from the legislation of 1911.) The faculty is requested to report weak students by placing the letters VPE ("very poor in English") in the column for remarks on the grade sheet and at the same time to send the committee evidence in the form of tests or other written work. Since its institution, this simple and regularized method of reporting has brought to light thirty or more students each term who need help with their English. While he is reviewing a student's work, it is very easy for an instructor to make a notation on the grade sheet and to forward a paper through faculty mail.

The present method of reporting makes it possible for the committee to begin work with a new group of weak students at the beginning of the term. After making up a list from the grade sheets, the committee collects such relevant information as the student's academic rank, his school or college of registration, and his previous record in English. It is too early to release or to generalize from statistics on these points. Having prepared its data, the committee notifies the student that he has been reported and officially requests him to attend the English Laboratory (to be discussed below) until he has made up his deficiencies. If he does not respond, he is sent a second letter informing him that his dean has been asked to note his failure to clear with the committee. In every case so far the second letter has obtained results. In this way the committee usually invokes its power to prevent the awarding of a degree well in advance of the date when it is to be taken. If a student has not been challenged before the term of his graduation, the committee is extremely reluctant to exert its full power.

Once weak students have been discovered, the committee must provide suitable instruction for them. Since all have attended or are attending ordinary classes in English, some kind of individual attention is in order. This the committee sup-



plies by means of the English Laboratory, which is maintained by the English department and is linked to the committee through a common chairman. (Students sent directly to the laboratory by their English teachers are not involved with the committee.) The laboratory is kept by a full-time instructor, trained and experienced in remedial work, who is available for tutorial instruction some thirty-eight hours a week. On a student's first visit to the laboratory, his papers, which have been previously transmitted by the committee, are examined and his weaknesses are discussed with him; thereafter he comes from one to three times a week until in the opinion of the laboratory supervisor he has corrected his deficiencies. He is then cleared with the committee. Rarely are students required to attend the laboratory more than one term, though some continue voluntarily for a while afterward if a place remains for them. Up to the present no student certified by the supervisor has been reported a second time. The importance of having the right person in the laboratory can hardly be overstressed.

The success of the committee depends to a considerable extent on the participation of the faculty in its program. It is right and proper that this should be so, for the committee can and should enforce only those standards that the faculty is willing to support. The function of the committee is to secure participation of the faculty by persuasive reminders and by the maintenance of an efficient machinery for dealing with students reported as deficient in English.

WILSON M. HUDSON

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS

### AMERICAN LITERATURE REVISITED

Few teachers of American literature are candid enough with themselves to admit that Emerson is a bore to his undergraduate readers, that in the traditional interpretation of his writings he is as far removed from the contemporary world as Plotinus and equally as mystifying. Thoreau is good for a

lively discussion about the place of the hermit in society, but the traditional and irrevocable judgment of Thoreau as the essence of Yankee independence has alienated his modern readers from him. Hawthorne and Melville, in their insistence upon the tragic view of life, are somewhat closer to readers today; but the standard presentation of Hawthorne as the novelist who tells us about seventeenth-century Puritan New England has made him of mild historical interest only. And Melville is outrageously long-winded, having more to say about whales than whales deserve to have said about them, even if they do stand for the evil in the world.

Say what you will, Americans are, at best, but indifferent toward their literary past. American literature may be historically interesting; but it is not a living literature, speaking to us in our time. Twenty-five years ago, as I can attest, this was not so. American literature, especially of the nineteenth century, was intellectually stimulating and a proud heritage; and in their persons the writers were worthy of emulation. But in 1925 we were still pleased to look at our literature from the nineteenth-century point of view. Today we must see it from the twentieth-century point of view or not at all.

There was a revival of our literary past in the 1930's, when American literature underwent, on the one hand, the scrutiny of the Marxist critics and, on the other, an antiquarian ransacking by Mr. Van Wyck Brooks. Although both movements were valuable as review, the Marxist critics were too narrowly in pursuit of their thesis, and Mr. Brooks was interested mostly in bringing to our attention picturesque personalities. Otherwise, devotion to our literature has been largely confined to the graduate schools, where, among the livelier scholars, flurries of excitement arise spasmodically over the symbolism of Hawthorne and Melville. The broad acceptance of our literary figures, as wise men who speak well at all times, we seem not to have been able to effect.

Why is it that we are not really enthusiastic about the literature of America? There seem to be two major reasons. First, American writers of the past are brought to us unrefreshed by new and contemporary interpretations. If they were truly great writers—and many of them were—we would find the continuity of their ideas unbroken and capable of contemporary restatement. But, in our anxiety to systematize and classify, we have preserved our writers neat and finished, duly recorded and entombed.

The second and in some ways more important reason for neglect of our writers is that they were colonial, which is to say provincial. We believe that American life and American ideals have changed so radically since the Civil War that what came before was a different culture, foreign, short-lived, and now quite dead, as ancient Athens is to modern Greece. It is felt that the history of the United States since the Civil War is the history of a new nation. Cultures from over the whole world have mingled to form a new way of life, a way lamented by those who are still colonial, a way applauded by those who have detached themselves from their past, wherever it may have taken place, and have settled, without a backward glance, into the new synthesis. Moreover, so rapid has been the change that the past has been obscured, the future is in doubt, and only the flux of the present is dimly discernible. But, most significant of all, in our eagerness to be an integral part of that one world which is everybody's world, we think of our early writers as insular and old-fashioned, and we tend to apologize for their work as native and sectional. Among no

other people is this true. Although other nations may also strive for social and political world unity, the urge of their cultural traditions is the source of their creative life. We do not read Franklin as the French read Voltaire; we do not read Emerson as the Germans read Kant; we do not read Hawthorne as the English read Dickens; we do not read Melville as the Russian reads Dostoevski. Even Whitman is not American in the same way that Tennyson and Browning are English. And Thoreau is not really, we think, one of us. He does not belong to the America of the cosmopolitan ideal, the nation of all nations. Thoreau belonged to a homogeneous society which had cultural ideals characteristic of a self-sufficing colonial province. But today we are a heterogeneous society, bound to no tradition except to ideals of freedom and individualism variously, vaguely, and loosely interpreted.

But it is a great mistake to suppose that we have severed relations with our past. Even if they could do it, it would not go well with a people to deny their heritage. And if one will look carefully, he will see that we have not broken with our traditions, we have only neglected to keep them nourished. We have been much too busy playing with the gadgets of modernity, supposing that the only fully grown world was born in America in the twentieth century, full-fledged from the brain of Santa Claus. Without forcing or romancing, there must be some way of reinterpreting our great writers that will restore them to us.

WELLER EMBLER

THE COOPER UNION, NEW YORK

## Report and Summary

THE JANUARY ISSUE OF *BRITAIN Today* is a Bernard Shaw number with an editorial and two articles devoted to him. R. A. Scott-James evaluates his influence upon society and makes the point that, no matter how hard Shaw stung, "he left behind no savour of bitterness; for the young as well as the old he was the cheering, zestful, great hearted veteran who loved the smell of battle on the field of idea." T. C. Worsley, in writing of "Shaw's Edwardian Comedies," predicts that it will be for *Androcles and the Lion*, *The Doctor's Dilemma*, and *Pygmalion* that he will perhaps be best remembered. "Memories of Shaw and Wells" by Gerald Heard in the February *Tomorrow* is a fabric of personal reminiscences delightfully related by Mr. Heard, who knew both authors intimately.

THE WRITERS WHO WERE YOUNG and publishing their first novels in the late 1920's are discussed by Benjamin Appel under the title, "My Generation of Writers," in the February *Tomorrow*. Among them are James Farrell, John O'Hara, Clifford Odets, Vardis Fisher, Erskine Caldwell, Irwin Shaw, and a score and more of others. It is rather like a round-robin letter in which a group of friends catch each other up on what each has been doing professionally. Apparently, many of them have been having a pretty stiff time, and their point of view is summed up by Vardis Fisher, who in a letter to Appel wrote, "Serious writers in this land cannot depend on politicians or more than a handful of enlightened readers, but have only their own guts."

IN "THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE Press Today" Albert Parry gives a good summary view of its status in the United States today. At the present time there are printed here in foreign languages nearly one

thousand newspapers, which have a total of six million readers. They make three important contributions to American civilization: first, they are the only free papers printed in the native languages of the many people who are silenced behind the Iron Curtain; second, they help Americanize the new immigrants and teach them many valuable facts about the land of their adoption; third, they keep alive the cultural interests and values of the Old World for many native-born Americans of foreign parentage and often influence the acquiring of the mastery of a second language. This last one, Mr. Parry thinks much less influential than the other two. Much of incidental interest comes out in his discussion of the characters of the papers and their problems. This article also appears in the February *Tomorrow*.

NO TEACHER SHOULD MISS THE Mid-Century Issue of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. One of the most interesting of its many pertinent articles is Stephen Spender's "Does the English Writer Have a Chance?" He doesn't much, according to Spender, who paints a very gloomy view of the literary situation in Britain.

"THE CARLYLES AND THE ASHBURTONS" in the autumn *Cornhill Magazine* (British) is an essay by Iris Origo, whose study of Byron's last attachment was one of the major biographical productions of 1949. Here, as in the earlier work, the substance of her study is drawn from a correspondence hitherto unpublished. Harriet Lady Ashburton, however, was a Victorian *grande dame*, quite different from Byron's Teresa, and Carlyle's relationship with her, though deeply emotional, was wholly platonic. Anyone interested in Carlyle will most certainly want to read it.

"PORTRAITS OF CRISIS," A DISCUSSION of the literary worth of William Faulkner by the Cuban writer, José Antonio Portuondo, appears in the February *Américas*, publication of the Pan American Union. He describes Faulkner as a "universal provincial" whose special contribution to literature has been to point out a new way of showing the process of growth and disintegration of a collective conscience through its participants. Other articles in this issue which will particularly interest teachers and students of world literature are Salvador Bueno's essay on the contemporary Cuban short-story writer, Lino Novás Calvo; an essay on Latin America's twentieth-century philosophers by Francisco Romero; and an excellent analysis of the literary weapons of political satire by Ricardo Donoso. *Américas*, just starting its second year, may be addressed at the Pan American Union Building, Washington 6, D.C. \$3.00 per year.

JANUARY'S *ATLANTIC MONTHLY* features a revealing essay by T. S. Eliot, and a serene color portrait of him dominates the cover of that issue. Eliot concerns himself with the restoration of poetic drama to its rightful place on the modern stage, but he interweaves a vivid appreciation of Shakespeare's poetic genius and references to the shortcomings and achievements of other dramatists with a frank and highly interesting account of his own difficulties, aims, and techniques in the writing of *Murder in the Cathedral*, *The Family Reunion*, and *The Cocktail Party*. He feels that poetic drama should reconquer its place by entering into "overt competition with prose drama." To do this, poetic drama must be able to portray modern situations in a verse suited to them rather than in forms utilized by great dramatists of previous times. "What we have to do is to bring poetry into the world in which the audience lives and to which it returns when it leaves the theatre; not to transport the audience into some imaginary world totally unlike their own, an unreal world in which poetry can be spoken." The artist most likely to accom-

plish this, Eliot feels, is the poet turned dramatist and not the dramatist turned poet. The essay, originally delivered at Harvard as a lecture, is offered in book form by Harvard University Press.

THE RECENT REVIVAL OF CRITICAL esteem for Victorian literature has restored Tennyson to a modicum of favor. He is, however, still belabored by many as being philosophically muddleheaded, especially so in his *In Memoriam*. The winter *Antioch Review* carries an article by Bella K. Milmed which should add to Tennyson's reputation as a thinker. Mrs. Milmed centers her paper around Tennyson's somewhat abortive attempts to reconcile science with religion in *In Memoriam*. Her first step is swiftly to disprove the notion that Tennyson was uninformed of the scientific discoveries of his time. Then, by means of a review of modern scientific and philosophic thought, she shows that Tennyson's doubts are still unresolved, that the reconciliation of science and religion is still to be accomplished. Even if the question of conflict between the two is no longer fundamental, the opposed human motivations underlying such conflict are. The issues raised by Tennyson, according to Mrs. Milmed, are still wide-open ones. "Through his interpretation, they become more meaningful even today, not only because he has been unexcelled in his feeling for the imaginative, human implications of scientific concepts, but also because he faced the problems of both the old science and the new at a time when both were inextricably mingled."

A BRIEF BUT METICULOUS EVALUATION of Gertrude Stein by Michael Heron appears in the January issue of *Envoy*, an Irish review of literature and art now entering its second year. Heron discusses Miss Stein's innovations in language, her experimentations with the problem of time, and her efforts to create a "continuous present." He points out that there is a dichotomy in her work, that books such as *The Auto-*

*biography of Alice B. Toklas and Paris, France* have the mark of Stein's style upon them but are conventional in comparison with her experimental works. These last he discusses in relation to her two theoretical books, *Composition and Explanation* and *Narration*. Heron concludes that Gertrude Stein has left a large legacy of thought and invention but that her ideas may take many years to assimilate. However, teachers acquainted with students' use of punctuation may feel that the rising generation has already accepted at least one of Gertrude Stein's conclusions, namely, that "a comma by helping you along, holding your coat for you and putting on your shoes keeps you from living your life as actively as you should lead it."

TEACHERS OF AMERICAN LITERATURE will want to refer their students to the February issue of the *National Geographic Magazine* and the winter issue of *American Heritage*, the quarterly published by the American Association for State and Local History. Both the city of Washington, D.C., and the Congressional Library have been celebrating their sesquicentennial anniversaries. One of the outstanding events commemorating them has been the Corcoran Gallery's exhibition of a series of historical paintings, drawings, and prints illustrating the country's growth. Entitled "American Processional," it was designed to encompass the years between 1492 and 1900 and to include political, economic, cultural, and social developments. The *National Geographic* reproduces in color thirty-three of the paintings, with a commentary by John and Blanche Leeper. *American Heritage* also has an illustrated article on the Corcoran exhibit as well as several others commemorating the two sesquicentennials. *American Heritage* is a periodical which ought to be in every school library. The articles are varied and excellent and would serve the uses of several departments, at least English, history, and art. The format—design, printing, paper, the wealth of excellent color and black-and-white illustrations—is beautiful.

The handiest comparison perhaps is to the French *L'Illustration*. And the cost is only \$3.00 a year for four issues. Subscriptions may be sent to Box 969, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

THE PLAYS, POEMS, AND NOVELS OF the late Charles Williams, who was also an editor of the Oxford University Press, have been known and admired in Great Britain for some fifteen years. Since his death in 1945, admiration of his writings has mounted almost to a cult, and, as a poet, Williams today is one of the strongest influences on young British poets. In this country, interest recently has been increasing, and within the last two years six of his novels have been published here for the first time. Of these, the best known is probably *Descent into Hell*. This has been called a "theological thriller." It is true that Williams makes use both of the devices of the mystery story and the symbols of theology, but the qualities which draw his readers to him are not so easily labeled. In the winter *Yale Review* George Parker Winship, Jr., outlines the shapes of some of the pieces which make up the puzzle of Williams' ability to fascinate. His article is entitled "This Rough Magic: The Novels of Charles Williams."

TWO LITERARY BEQUESTS OF much interest have recently been made to the libraries of Dartmouth College and of Princeton University. A valuable collection of materials by and relating to the dramatist Eugene O'Neill has been presented to Dartmouth by Mrs. Bella C. Landauer of New York. It includes first editions of his plays, including Swedish and Japanese; programs of the productions of his plays, many of foreign origin; and a considerable number of his letters. The papers of Booth Tarkington have been received by Princeton from his widow. These include the manuscripts of most of his writings—novels, plays, poems, and short stories—thousands of letters, and many other documents which



are said to present an "extraordinarily complete record of Tarkington's active life."

"EUGENE O'NEILL AS POET OF THE Theatre" is discussed by Alan S. Downer in the February *Theatre Arts*. Downer points out that it is frequently charged that the language of O'Neill's plays does not equal in intensity the action and the situations. O'Neill's great strength, Downer thinks, is his acute sense of organic form; and because of this the structure of each play, the pattern of the action, the shaping of the dialogue, always follow a strict design. As the result of O'Neill's superb use of the material of the theater on different levels, he is able to achieve an effect similar to the effect of poetic language in the older dramas, and this accounts for the impact of much of O'Neill's work, in spite of the lack of poetic language in his dialogue. Two of his plays, *Mourning Becomes Electra* and *Desire under the Elms*, Downer considers "the highest moments of the American drama."

PHYLON, ATLANTA UNIVERSITY quarterly, gives over its winter issue to an extended consideration of the Negro in contemporary letters. Twenty writers, among them Poets Arna Bontemps, Gwendolyn Brooks, and Langston Hughes, along with NCTE members Nick Aaron Ford and N. P. Tillman, discuss the achievements, present status, and future of the Negro writer in America.

RECIPIENTS OF THE SECOND ANNUAL National Book Awards are William Faulkner for his *Collected Stories*, Newton Arvin for his biography, *Herman Melville*, and Wallace Stevens for his book of poetry, *The Auroras of Autumn*. A special citation was given to Brendan Gill, *New Yorker* staff member, for his first novel, *The Trouble of One House*. Both Faulkner and Stevens have been similarly honored before, Faulkner having been awarded the Nobel Prize last year and Stevens the Bollingen Prize. Arvin, a professor of English at Smith College, has also written biographies of Whit-

man and Hawthorne. The gold medal awards, offered by associations representing the American book industry, were presented in March to the authors selected by a distinguished array of critics and authors. Last year's winners were Nelson Algren for *The Man with the Golden Arm*, Ralph Rusk for *The Life of Ralph Waldo Emerson*, and William Carlos Williams for *Paterson III*.

E. E. CUMMINGS HAS BEEN AWARDED the 1950 Fellowship of the Academy of American Poets for his distinguished service to American letters. Adrienne Cecile Rich has been selected as the 1950 addition to the "Yale Series of Younger Poets." Her book of forty poems, *A Change of World*, is scheduled to appear this spring. *The Cocktail Party* has won for T. S. Eliot \$2,800 in the form of the annual *Times* (London) literary prize. The award is given annually for "an outstanding contribution to English literature."

"RATIONALE OF ACADEMIC FREEDOM" by DR Scott in the winter *Bulletin of the American Association of University Professors* attempts to clarify and sharpen the meaning of "academic freedom" by discussing it in relation to the administration of the individual institution of higher education, in relation to the sphere of action and responsibility of the individual who is engaged directly in academic work, and in relation to the area of cultural relations in which the university plays its role as a social institution. Space does not permit an adequate summary, but some indication of Scott's thinking may be given. He remarks that administration violations are not always to be explained by personal shortcomings but that the violations may be a by-product of an administration which is not adequately educational. Again, he observes that there are unlabeled violations of academic freedom among faculty members themselves, as when, for example, one person tries to force his point of view upon a whole department. "The teacher is the servant of society," he says. If he subjects

his position as a teacher to membership in the Communist party, "he violates his obligations of academic freedom and disqualifies himself." However, he continues, this test is not one which applies wholly to Communists. If a teacher were to subject his faculty position to membership in the Democratic party, the Masonic lodge, or the Roman Catholic church, he would be similarly disqualified. On the other hand, he also warns against the dangers of conservatism, particularly in relation to the role of the university in cultural relations. "If we were to make the University a defender and apologist for a cultural pattern we are giving up," he states, "we would be no better than the Nazis or Communists."

**THREATS TO OUR INTELLECTUAL** freedom are not confined to the campuses of colleges or universities, as an article in the *Nation* (February 5) makes clear. In Bartlesville, Oklahoma, Ruth Brown, for thirty-one years the town librarian, was discharged allegedly because she permitted "subversive literature—*The Nation*, *The New Republic*, *Soviet Russia Today*"—to be displayed. Her arbitrary dismissal has been condemned by the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the Oklahoma Library Association in a report prepared after a four-month study of the case. The report charges that the citizens' committee which attacked Miss Brown actually was motivated by opposition to her belief in fair treatment for Negroes and her challenges of "Jim Crow" in Bartlesville. The report then states a principle which should be in the thoughts of us all as citizens:

[Libraries] do not indoctrinate. They serve all segments of a society, not any one political, social, economic, racial, or religious group. . . . We cannot adopt the enemy's tactics and not be smeared with his tar. We cannot defend freedom by the use of oppression. . . .

We are well aware that we must have the opportunity to discover who is our enemy, to know his beliefs, his tactics in order to expose them successfully. The citizens' committee would deny this to the citizens of Bartlesville.

It would require them to read only that which it considered proper. It would leave them in ignorance.

**THE WINTER ISSUE OF THE KEY Reporter**, Phi Beta Kappa quarterly, reports that the American Psychological Association has announced that its placement service will not assist in filling any vacancies at the University of California because of the existing situation caused by the loyalty-oath controversies. It is recommending that none of its members accept positions there.

**A CONTROVERSIAL ARTICLE WHICH** has caused considerable press comment appears in the January *American Legion*. Entitled "Why You Buy Books That Sell Communism," it is written by one Irene Kuhn, who charges that the book business has been penetrated and in large measure taken over by Communist-minded people working as editors, critics, and salespeople. Some bookstores, she says, push Communist-slanted books because the owners and employees think that way. Other unsuspecting bookshop owners, who depend upon the newspaper and magazine book-review sections to help them in choosing their stock, feature such books because the left-wing reviewers have praised them. Her most serious charges are against the *New York Times*, the *New York Herald Tribune*, and the *Saturday Review of Literature* for what she alleges to be their dubious methods of choosing reviewers of controversial books and their practice of ignoring books which Communists do not want the American public to read. For example, she claims that some of the recent books on China were deliberately given for review to persons who were known in advance to be violently opposed to the views expressed by the authors of the books. She also gives evidence as to how the Brooklyn Public Library did not purchase *Seeds of Treason* because of unfavorable reviews of it which had been read by those intrusted with the purchase of books. Miss Kuhn does not generalize. She names names, places, dates, and publications throughout. Never-

theless, some of her evidence will appear fragmentary in relation to the magnitude of her charges. For example, from an editorial point of view, it probably would be difficult to find anyone who really knew about China who didn't have very sharp views on one side or another. One fact, however, does emerge very clearly—the power and influence of the book reviewer.

KENYON COLLEGE HAS ANNOUNCED that it has turned over its interest in the School of English to Indiana University, which will operate it as the School of Letters at Bloomington, Indiana. The transfer was occasioned by the fact that the original funds secured for the School of English three years ago have been exhausted. The educational ideal and plan of courses which were in effect at Kenyon will be maintained at Indiana. The staff of Fellows and Senior Fellows is intact. For notice of the course offerings for the summer of 1951, write Richard B. Hudson, The School of Letters, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana.

AFFILIATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL Auxiliary Language Association with Barnard College has also been announced. The association was founded twenty-five years ago as a clearing-house for information and research statistics and study of an international language. This will be the first time in Barnard's history that it has made a formal connection with any research organization outside Columbia University. The association will have the status of an institute within the college but will retain its corporate identity. It will remain financially independent of Barnard and will seek funds for future research and expansion.

DRAKE UNIVERSITY, DES MOINES, Iowa, has adopted a plan similar to the one announced recently by Columbia University. Drake now admits mature persons (at least twenty-one years of age) who have not been graduated from high school. These students are "unclassified." A student ad-

mitted under this plan who hopes to qualify for a degree is assigned to an adviser for educational counseling. After successfully completing thirty semester-hours of work, he may petition an undergraduate college in the university for regular status. The college, in acting on the petition, may require the student to take whatever examination it deems necessary. If the petition is granted, the student may become a candidate for a degree.

THE REPORTER, AN INTERPRETIVE news magazine, designed to supplement and make meaningful the daily newspaper, is offering a special college rate to students, three months, six issues, for one dollar. Every two weeks it selects a subject of importance to the whole country, investigates it thoroughly, and presents the significant facts and ideas in several articles written from different points of view and by persons of diverse experience. In the field of English teaching this magazine could be very useful in communications courses, journalism, and speech classes. Trial bulk supplies are available without obligation. Address: The Reporter, 220 East Forty-second Street, New York 17.

"A IS FOR AARDVARK" BY ROBERT WALLACE in *Life* (February 12) is a historical essay on the art of dictionary-making occasioned by the recent appearance of the *Thorndike-Barnhart Comprehensive Desk Dictionary* published by Doubleday. Wallace makes quite clear that the old authoritarian attitude of the dictionary-maker is no longer fashionable; that permissiveness is now accepted as a guiding principle for evaluating standard usage. He gives a very good account of Thorndike's theory and his methods of making word counts. A good article to which to refer the student.

TWO ARTICLES IN THE JANUARY *Junior College Journal* are concerned with the teaching of English. An essay by Beverly E. Fisher, executive committee member of NCTE's Conference on College Composi-

tion and Communication, discusses the particular importance of "Communications Courses for Junior Colleges." Mr. Fisher thinks that the junior-college communications course can steer a middle path between the typical university freshman English class and the efforts of some local schools to provide an all-out vocational course tailored to immediate needs. He views such a course rather as a "survey course planned to anticipate the linguistic needs of the individual who must participate in many kinds of verbal situations." Raymona Hull, in her "Reading Interests of Technical Institute Freshmen, 1950," reports some interesting results of her study of the reading habits of 36 women and 59 men students. Among them are: (1) men and women freshmen seem to have directly opposite reading interests; (2) all but exceptional readers prefer short magazine articles to books; (3) a surprisingly large number of junior-college freshmen read books of clearly juvenile appeal; (4) the influence of the book clubs and pocket books upon such readers is great; and (5) so-called "classics" stressed in high school literature seem to have no carry-over into college reading tastes.

THOSE WHO ARE UNDERTAKING the difficult task of teaching English to foreign-born students will find assistance in the pages of *English Language Teaching*, a British magazine devoted entirely to this subject. Particularly valuable are the book reviews of texts designed primarily for more mature students who are learning English as a second language. For a sample copy send sixpence (about fifteen cents) to The British Council, 65 Davies Street, London, W. 1.

THE HYSTERIA CONCERNING COMMUNISM recently has produced a new absurdity—the books of Mark Van Doren have been banned from the library of the

Jersey City Junior College by the Jersey City Board of Education on the grounds of being Communistic. Van Doren, professor of English at Columbia University, whose *Collected Poems* in 1938 won the Pulitzer Prize, has produced a score of other books, such as his studies of the works of Thoreau and Shakespeare, his *Liberal Education*, and his *Autobiography of America*. The *Nation*, which reports the Jersey City action, predicts a boom for the Muse as a result. We might suggest that the Board of Education peruse the pages of Thomas Merton's *Seven Storey Mountain*, in which he pays tribute to Van Doren's greatness as a teacher, for Merton, far from turning Communistic, is a member of the strictest Roman Catholic order.

"I'M A TEACHER WHO IS GETTING Rich" in the *Saturday Evening Post* (January 20) is by James C. G. Conniff, an English teacher in a small eastern college. Although it is of the rewards of college teaching which Conniff writes, his point of view will also interest secondary-school teachers. Conniff feels that a teacher's greatest recompense comes from the chance to help students with their personal problems. "Teaching," he says, "can endow the teacher with the kind of spiritual property a man can occupy tax-free for a lifetime." He gives numerous specific illustrations from his own experience. Good ammunition for committees on teacher recruitment and also for committees on the status of teachers.

THE FRENCH INTERCULTURAL Commission in February held an exhibition of books published in France in 1950 which it considered to be the choice of the year's crop. Copies of a bibliography of the books displayed may be obtained by writing the French Embassy, 934 Fifth Avenue, New York 21, New York.

## *New Books*

### *Teaching Materials*

**AN INTRODUCTION TO LITERATURE AND THE FINE ARTS.** Michigan State College Press. Pp. 418. \$5.50.

The chapters in this collaborative work were written by specialists in literature, visual arts, and music in the Basic College of Michigan State College. The integrating principle is a chronological arrangement of the epochs of Western culture; the basic assumption is that all the artistic works of an epoch have a common resolution. Thus they are viewed not only for the qualities of the medium but also for their reflection of the milieu and their role in the cultural tradition. Objection has been made to this approach as commonly employed in general courses in the humanities because it does not aim to meet the everyday needs of students. Consequently, there has been an increase of approaches, each an effort to make the humanities functional in relation to life-situations. Although one returns with satisfaction to the validity of the approach used in this volume, one wonders to what extent students' tastes and interests will be affected.

Teachers of literature will doubt that literature is given an adequate amount of discussion. In a volume of 418 pages, only 57 pages contain analyses of individual literary works. No literary work is included in the section on the Middle Ages. Choice of alternate works of the same literary type is offered throughout the book; desirable as such choice may be, the scope of the literature would have been increased by the inclusion of a greater variety of types. The paucity of literature creates an imbalance between the literature and the fine arts.

The book is replete with halftones of painting, sculpture, and architecture and with excerpts from the scores of musical compositions. The use of the excellent analyses of poems would have been enhanced by the inclusion of the complete texts of the poems. The final chapter is a detailed treatment of the elements and forms of music; one regrets the absence of similar chapters for literature and the visual arts.

Probably because of the multiple authorship, the book lacks sufficient indications of relationships among the arts in content and formal qualities.

Programs in general education increasingly include correlated courses in literature and the fine arts. Few satisfactory textbooks exist for use in these courses. This volume, sound in scholarship, interestingly written for reading by undergraduates, and attractive in format, meets a strongly felt need.

SAMUEL WEINGARTEN

CHICAGO CITY JUNIOR COLLEGE

**CLEAR WRITING.** By LEO KIRSCHBAUM. Holt. Pp. 375. \$2.40.

Mr. Kirschbaum's approach is pleasant and almost unique, since he regards the freshman student as a member of the human race and one who is dealing not with special but with universal problems of effective composition. However, he also knows the average student's disabilities! Thus, he talks directly and lucidly to the student, omitting all minutiae and stressing the essentials. For example, the first chapter deals with "The Minimum of Grammar and Punctuation." In it, he discusses primarily the errors which are considered most reprehensible and those which the students are most likely to make. If they can master the essentials which the author stresses, most students will feel that a light has appeared in the clearing, and most teachers will feel that the student has been led to literacy.

**THE BRITISH DRAMA: A HANDBOOK AND BRIEF CHRONICLE.** By ALAN S. DOWNER. Appleton-Century-Crofts. Pp. 397. \$3.00.

This compact volume is likely to become a well-esteemed companion of the student "taking drama" for the first time. Starting with the folk and liturgical plays, the whole range of the British drama's growth down through the con-



temporary revival of poetic drama is set forth with care and clarity. Professor Downer has compressed an amazing amount of information into a handbook that is not only sound but readable. The thirty illustrations have been carefully chosen to help the students visualize the plays of each period in the theater of the period.

**THE WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE.** Oxford University Press. Pp. 1280. \$5.00.

A new printing of the "Shakespeare Head Press Edition" of the complete works of Shakespeare gathered into one volume. The molds of the first (three-volume) edition (1934; reprinted 1937) were destroyed during the Battle of Britain, so this edition has been reset from type. The text is that prepared by A. H. Bullen, in 1904, in which the plays are arranged in the chronological order of their composition. The introductory life of Shakespeare, however, is new and is written by Bernard H. Newdigate. Clearly printed; well bound. A prize for the price.

**ENGLISH MASTERPIECES, Vol. I: THE AGE OF CHAUCER.** Edited by WILLIAM FROST. Pp. 338. Vol. II: **ELIZABETHAN DRAMA.** Edited by LEONARD DEAN. Pp. 334. Vol. III: **RENAISSANCE POETRY.** Edited by LEONARD DEAN. Pp. 340. Vol. IV: **MILTON.** Edited by MAYNARD MACK. Pp. 340. Vol. V: **THE AUGUSTANS.** Edited by MAYNARD MACK. Pp. 343. Vol. VI: **ROMANTIC AND VICTORIAN POETRY.** Edited by WILLIAM FROST. Pp. 336. Vol. VII: **MODERN POETRY.** Edited by MAYNARD MACK, LEONARD DEAN, and WILLIAM FROST. Pp. 312. Set (7 vols., boxed), \$7.85.

The character of these volumes derives from a common conviction shared by the editors that there is need for an anthology which presents writings which are primarily valuable as works of art. This is not to say that they subscribe to the idea of divorcing form from content but rather that the works they have chosen to include have been selected 'because they are imaginatively interesting. Another editorial disposition which has shaped the character of the series has been that of including only whole works, not excerpts. Space limitations have thus legislated against prose, and against novels in

particular, so that the set is primarily a poetry anthology, and the prose represented is chiefly that of the eighteenth century. Selections are limited, for the most part, to the major and familiar works of major writers. Biographical and bibliographical material is adequate for the general reader. Indexes are sadly lacking.

**AMERICAN LIFE IN LITERATURE: ABRIDGED EDITION.** Edited by JAY B. HUBBELL. Harper. Pp. 870. \$5.00.

A shortened form of the two-volume anthology which first appeared in 1936 and in a revised form in 1949. Selections from forty-seven major American writers, arranged chronologically from 1607 to 1950. Includes biographical introductions, historical interchapters, chronological tables, bibliographies, and maps.

**A COMPLETE COURSE IN FRESHMAN ENGLISH.** By HARRY SHAW. With the editorial co-operation of A. J. BRYAN and GEORGE S. WYKOFF. 3d ed. Harper. Pp. 843. \$4.25.

This third edition presents a thorough reworking of the materials of the earlier edition, but the general plan of the book remains the same. It is an interrelated rhetoric, handbook, and collection of readings.

### Paperbacks

**PROBLEMS IN AMERICAN CIVILIZATION.** Readings Selected by the Department of American Studies, Amherst College. **THE CAUSES OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.** Edited with an Introduction by JOHN C. WAHLKE. Pp. 108. **HAMILTON AND THE NATIONAL DEBT.** Edited with an Introduction by GEORGE ROGERS TAYLOR. Pp. 108. **INDUSTRY-WIDE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING, PROMISE OR MENACE?** Edited with an Introduction by COLSTON E. WARNE. Pp. 113. **PRAGMATISM AND AMERICAN CULTURE.** Edited with an Introduction by GAIL KENNEDY. Pp. 114. **PURITANISM IN EARLY AMERICA.** Edited with an Introduction by GEORGE M. WALLER. Pp. 115. **ROOSEVELT, WILSON, AND THE TRUSTS.** Pp. 115. Heath. Each \$1.00.

These little volumes present opposing points of view and interpretations. Selections are from

both contemporary and historical sources. Purpose: to stimulate students to vigorous and independent thought.

**JOHN DONNE.** Edited by JOHN HAYWARD. Penguin Books. Great Britain. Allen Lane Inc. (3300 Clipper Mill Road, Baltimore, Md. Distributor). Pp. 182. \$0.35.

The best of Donne, edited for the general reader by the scholar who edited the Nonesuch Press *Donne*, has edited many other works, and shares a flat in Chelsea with T. S. Eliot.

**A SHAKESPEARE PRIMER.** By GERALD SANDERS. Rinehart. Pp. 224. \$0.95.

A sound and useful little handbook for students beginning the study of Shakespeare in college. The aim is to supply the basic information on Shakespeare's life, times, and theater, upon which there is general agreement, and thus save class time for discussion of the plays. An excellent bibliography is provided for students who wish to go exploring into the wider fields of Shakespearean research.

**PROSE AND POETRY FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.** Edited by J. F. FULLINGTON. Pp. 113. **NARRATIVES FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.** Edited by J. F. FULLINGTON. Pp. 114. Appleton-Century-Crofts. Each \$0.35.

**THESIS WRITING: A GUIDE TO SCHOLARLY STYLE.** By RALPH M. ALBAUGH. Littlefield, Adams. Pp. 149. \$1.00.

Helpful information for graduate students concerning the scholarly conventions and the mechanics of thesis-writing. Suggestions range from the need of courtesy and objectivity to the care and cleaning of typewriters. Illustrated with reproductions of actual manuscript pages with analyses of mechanical requirements.

**WORKING WITH WORDS: FORMS A AND B.** By EDWIN F. SHEWMAKE. 2 vols. Harper. Pp. 122 each vol. \$1.00 each.

Two workbooks to aid in vocabulary-building. The expository material on meanings, origins, etc., is the same in each; the exercises are different.

### Reprints

**"THE WORLD'S CLASSICS": POEMS OF ROBERT BURNS.** Selected and edited by LAURENCE BRANDER. Pp. 333. \$1.10. **BEAUCHAMP'S CAREER.** By GEORGE MEREDITH. With an Introduction by G. M. YOUNG. Pp. 547. \$1.75. **THE WRECKER.** By R. L. STEVENSON and LLOYD OSBOURNE. Pp. 457. \$1.10. Oxford University Press.

**"MODERN LIBRARY COLLEGE EDITIONS": THE RED BADGE OF COURAGE.** By STEPHEN CRANE. Introduction by R. W. STALLMAN. Pp. 267. **SELECTED POETRY OF ROBERT BROWNING.** Edited with an Introduction by KENNETH L. KNICKERBOCKER. Pp. 729. **LOOKING BACKWARD.** By EDWARD BELLAMY. Introduction by ROBERT L. SHURTER. Pp. 276. **SELECTED POETRY OF LORD BYRON.** Edited with an Introduction by LESLIE A. MARCHAND. Pp. 639. **TESS OF THE D'URBERVILLES.** By THOMAS HARDY. Introduction by CARL J. WEBER. Pp. 508. **PORTRAIT OF A LADY.** By HENRY JAMES. Introduction by FRED B. MILLETT. Pp. 437. **SELECTED WORKS OF ALEXANDER POPE.** Edited with an Introduction by LOUIS KRONENBERGER. Foreword by JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH. Pp. 387. **SELECTED POETRY AND PROSE OF PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.** Edited with an Introduction by CARLOS BAKER. Pp. 524. **THE COMPLETE WRITINGS OF THUCYDIDES: THE PELOPONNESIAN WAR.** Introduction by JOHN H. FINLEY, JR. Pp. 516. Random House. Each \$0.65. (Paperback.)

### Professional

**THE MODERN SHORT STORY: FIRST AMERICAN EDITION.** By H. E. BATES. The Writer, Inc. Pp. 231. \$2.75.

This volume has already gone through five printings in Great Britain since it was first is-

sued in 1941. Its appearance here coincides most opportunely with the spate of short-story anthologies which have recently appeared. Mr. Bates, himself a well-known short-story writer, has written a critical survey of the art of the

short story, tracing its main line of development from Poe to the present day in America, France, Russia, and Great Britain. His style is felicitous and perceptive, and although he will not receive the plaudits of the New Critics, he will be read with enjoyment and understanding by the general reader.

**SHAKESPEARE AND SPENSER.** By W. B. C. WATKINS. Princeton University Press. Pp. 339. \$5.00.

Eight essays in which the author explores the techniques and themes which Shakespeare and Spenser had in common. Some of these are the interdependence of the physical and the spiritual, the nature of allegory, the use of the pictorial to embody central meaning, and the craft of language. Specialists in Elizabethan literature will find the entire book stimulating and suggestive. The chapter on *King Lear* will be of interest to all who teach Shakespeare.

**SIR THOMAS BROWNE: A DOCTOR'S LIFE OF SCIENCE AND FAITH.** By JEREMIAH S. FINCH. Henry Schuman. Pp. 319. \$3.50.

It would be difficult for anyone to write a dull biography of the ebullient Sir Thomas, and Professor Finch is no exception. His biography is obviously a labor of love. However, although the eighteen illustrations are well chosen and the print is clear, it is unfortunate that the format and the paper are not of better quality.

**THE PLEASURES OF POPE.** Selected and introduced by PETER QUENNELL. Pantheon. Pp. 265. \$3.00.

The author has planned this volume to give pleasure, "to provide the uninstructed or unsympathetic reader with an introduction to Pope's genius and to allow him a foretaste of pleasures still in store for him should he care to dig more deeply." The volume includes *Windsor Forest*, *An Essay on Criticism*, *The Rape of the Lock*, *An Essay on Man*, selections from the *Dunciad*, and more than a dozen of the shorter poems. Print and paper are excellent.

**STUDIES IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY POETIC.** By RUTH WALLERSTEIN. University of Wisconsin Press. Pp. 421. \$6.50.

Miss Wallerstein has made a study of the seventeenth-century funeral elegy with the two-

fold purpose of examining the evolution of seventeenth-century poetry as a whole and the work of Andrew Marvell in particular. She writes of both subjects in relation to their philosophical backgrounds and in so doing recreates a vivid picture of the intellectual and imaginative world in which these poets lived.

**THE LIFE RECORDS OF JOHN MILTON,** Vol. II. By J. MILTON FRENCH. Rutgers University Press. Pp. 395. \$5.00.

The second in a projected series of four volumes. It continues the records of Milton's life from the point of his return to England in 1639 after his journey to Italy and ends in 1651, with the appearance of the *First Defense of the English People*.

**BOSWELL'S LIFE OF JOHNSON,** Vols. V and VI. Edited by GEORGE BIRKBECK HILL. Revised and enlarged by L. F. POWELL. Vol. V: *THE TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES AND THE JOURNEY INTO NORTH WALES*. Pp. 595. Vol. VI: *INDEX. TABLE OF ANONYMOUS PERSONS, BIBLIOGRAPHY, ERRATA*. Pp. 484. Oxford University Press. \$12.50 set.

The first four volumes of the revised version of Hill's edition of Boswell's *Life* (published in 1887 and long out of print) were issued in 1934. These two concluding volumes of Hill's well-known *Commentary*, excellently edited by Dr. Powell, represent the final shoring-up of a landmark in Johnsonian scholarship.

**BEN JONSON,** Vols. IX and X. Edited by C. H. HERFORD and PERCY and EVELYN SIMPSON. Vol. X: *PLAY COMMENTARY, MASQUE COMMENTARY*. Pp. 710. Vol. IX: *AN HISTORICAL SURVEY OF THE TEXT, STAGE HISTORY OF THE PLAYS, AND COMMENTARY ON THE PLAYS*. Pp. 732. Oxford University Press. Each \$7.00.

The ninth and tenth volumes of a complete critical edition, begun in 1888, to be issued in eleven volumes. The first eight volumes contain the texts of Jonson's works; Volume IX takes the commentary as far as *Volpone*; Volume X includes the commentary on the remaining plays and the masques. The eleventh and final volume will include the commentary on the poems and the prose works, supplementary matter, and an index. A definitive edition,

beautifully printed with photogravure and colotype illustrations.

**COLLEGE PROGRAMS IN INTERGROUP RELATIONS.** Edited by LLOYD ALLEN COOK. American Council on Education. Pp. 365. \$3.75.

This is the first volume of a two-volume report by twenty-four colleges participating in the college study in intergroup relations, 1945-49. It is also a report of the first co-operative effort in the United States to improve teacher education in respect to intergroup relations. Following an introduction by Dr. Cook, who was the director of the project, there are presented detailed analyses of twenty-four concrete college programs and a final chapter of conclusions. Of their conclusions, one of the most important is that "the three most basic factors accounting for school and college inaction in high tensional areas of intergroups relations are teacher insecurity, administrative unconcern, and community pressure, a chain of cause-effect-cause relations that takes many concrete forms and for which we have found no certain and easy corrective."

**PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCESSES OF COLLEGE STUDENTS: AN EXPLORATORY INVESTIGATION.** By BENJAMIN S. BLOOM and LOIS J. BRODER. University of Chicago Press. Pp. 109. \$2.75.

An investigation of the processes of thinking done by students when attempting to solve problems. The conclusions are necessarily tentative, but the authors are convinced that a study of the problem-solving processes is basic to an understanding of individual differences—their measurement and control.

**THE PREPARATION OF COLLEGE TEACHERS.** Edited by THEODORE C. BLEGEN and RUSSELL M. COOPER. "American Council on Education Studies," Series I, No. 42. Washington D.C. Pp. 186. \$1.75. (Paperback.)

Report of a conference held in Chicago, December 8-10, 1949, sponsored by the American Council on Education and the United States Office of Education. Includes the texts of seven major addresses and the reports of six workshops. At the end of the conference the members unanimously adopted a resolution calling for the establishment of a national commission to continue the discussion launched at Chicago and to forward projects of investigation and development centered in the improvement of the training of college teachers. Steps are being taken to bring this about. A short report of a conference held in December, 1950, at Chicago, "On Improving the Effectiveness of College Faculties," appears in *Higher Education* (January 15) and will shortly be published in full as a companion volume to this.

## Nonfiction

**MY SIX CONVICTS.** By DONALD P. WILSON. Rinehart. \$3.50.

A psychologist's three years of research in drug addiction at Fort Leavenworth Penitentiary. Dr. Wilson chose (or they chose him) as assistants six convicts of uneducated gangster-safecracker types. "Embarrassingly clever, they could have given me no end of trouble." Instead they became real, warm friends of "Doc." A study of the criminal, yes; but, above all, a study of human nature—the men were so much like the rest of us. The weird penitentiary "grape vine"—the uncanny touch of the inmates with one another and with the gang outside—and their contempt of a society that lets so many equally guilty men go free and respected give food for thought. February Book-of-the Month co-selection.

**THE FAR SIDE OF PARADISE.** By ARTHUR MIZENER. Houghton. \$4.00.

An absorbing biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald, exponent and example of the Jazz Age, flaming youth of the twenties. Mr. Mizener had access to the private papers of Fitzgerald and pictures vividly, honestly, and sympathetically the writer and the legends which have grown up about his life and that of his wife Zelda. The revival of interest in Fitzgerald is one of the big literary and publishing events of the present. Many people are re-reading *The Great Gatsby*, *This Side of Paradise*, etc. Parts of this biography ran in the *Atlantic* of December-January-February.

**DISTURBER OF THE PEACE.** By WILLIAM MANCHESTER. Harper. \$3.75.

A biography of H. L. Mencken. The author is a *Baltimore Sun* staff member, with access to Mencken's memoirs and papers. A vivid, frank study of the man who jarred people with

*Prejudices*, etc., and stirred teachers of English with *The American Language*.

**IMAGISM: A CHAPTER FOR THE HISTORY OF MODERN POETRY.** By STANLEY K. COFFMAN, JR. University of Oklahoma Press. Pp. 235. \$3.00.

Besides the chapters on the movement and its connections, there are a whole chapter on T. E. Hulme (often referred to but rarely expounded) and others on Pound and "Amygism." Without extravagant enthusiasm over the Imagists, Coffman tries to trace the effects this movement of the 1910's has left.

**STURGIS STANDARD CODE OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE.** By ALICE F. STURGIS. McGraw-Hill. Pp. 268. \$2.50.

Apparently the most authoritative manual of parliamentary procedure ever published. Practicing lawyers, deans of law schools, and Supreme Court justices have been consulted, as well as college presidents, James A. Farley, Paul Hoffman, and Robert Pooley. Useless or troublesome procedures—substitute motions, for instance—have been omitted, and the useful procedures organized for clarity and ready reference.

**HENRY GROSS AND HIS DOWSING ROD.** By KENNETH ROBERTS. Doubleday. \$3.00.

Henry Gross has had remarkable success in locating underground water with his dowsing rod. Roberts seems to have perfect faith in his eerie power. We do know there are some things in this world which can't be explained. Readers interested in land, in the unusual, those who question ghosts, second sight, and extrasensory perception—and those who don't—will find this a fascinating book.

**THE LAND OF THE CAMEL: TENTS AND TEMPLES OF INNER MONGOLIA.** By SCHUYLER CAMMANN. Roland. \$5.00.

An interesting word and picture account of what the author and a small group of Americans saw in this little-known country in 1945—just before the Chinese Communists barred travelers from other lands and exploited the Mongols. Cammann fortunately saw these people before changes came: the family life, customs, religious rites, monks and lamaseries. The author speaks Chinese.

**BIG PAN-OUT: THE STORY OF THE KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH.** By KATHRYN WINSLOW. Norton. \$3.75.

A recluse who had hoped to write the Klondike story willed to Miss Winslow the diaries, books, and papers which he had written and collected. She was fascinated by the two full diaries and made further research. A colorful story of the great gold rush of 1896. Many intimate and personal stories of people known or forgotten. Maps.

**THE LIFE AND WORKS OF D. H. LAWRENCE.** By HARRY T. MOORE. Twayne. \$4.50.

A critical study of a controversial figure; novels, stories, poems, and essays are analyzed, with emphasis upon his early years and childhood. "Lawrence stressed passion not because he believed in passion exclusively, but because he believed it should be brought into balance with intellect." Lawrence's personal troubles, Moore says, were the troubles of an age of world chaos, 1885-1930. An interesting study of an introvert, even though some of it may be questioned.

**THE SHORT STORY.** By SEAN O'FAOLAIN. Devin-Adair. \$3.75.

"An exposition of the Art and a discussion of the Craft—with examples by Daudet, Chekov, Maupassant, Stevenson, Henry James, Frank O'Connor, Elizabeth Bower, and Hemingway." "The things I like to find in a story are punch and poetry . . . they come I think from a combination of . . . plausibility and personal voltage." In three parts: "The Personal Struggle," "The Technical Struggle," and "Illustration." The third part consists of eight stories.

**THE SAVANNAH.** By THOMAS L. STOKES. Rinehart. \$4.00.

Forty-third volume of the "Rivers of America." Of this series one critic says: "One of the *must* possessions of every reader interested in knowing something of the past America out of which *today's* grew." This volume opens with the beginnings of history as we know them in the Deep South: the Indians, Spaniards, French, English. It is full of mystery, magic, greed. A colorful study of a past with hope for future development. The author is a native of Georgia—a political analyst and a Pulitzer Prize winner.



**THE STORY OF THE WORLD'S LITERATURE.** By JOHN MACY. Rev. ed. Live-right. Pp. 615. \$2.89.

"If there is in English another compact general history of literature as good as this one, I do not know what it is. The charm of Mr. Macy's book lies in the spirit which warms the whole record. For all his freshness of opinion, he is extraordinarily free from prejudices," says Carl Van Doren. "Sound and vigorous," says the American Library Association. Handsome illustrations.

**GOTHAM YANKEE: A BIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT.** By HARRY HOUSTON PECKHAM. Vantage. Pp. 227. \$3.50.

In the Preface Professor Peckham gives four reasons for his new Bryant biography: No biography has appeared for over forty years. Bryant is a figure and man of prime importance. He has been misrepresented as a frigid and uninteresting personality. There is recently discovered documentary material. A complete study, not fictionalized. The youth, poet, lawyer, editor, and crusader. Professor Peckham says he found Bryant to have a colorful personality, to be a champion of liberal arts ideas and movements, a broadly cosmopolitan citizen, and a great public influence. And he could be gay.

### Reprints

**CARL AKELEY'S AFRICA.** (New Edition.) By MARY L. JOBE AKELEY. Dodd, Mead. \$5.00.

The country, the people, and particularly the scenery of mountains and veldt with their wealth of flowers and vegetation.

**THE BAD MAN OF THE WEST.** By GEORGE HENDRICKS. Naylor Company (San Antonio). Pp. 248. \$2.95.

A revised edition of a study of an immortal type in American history and literature. While based on as accurate accounts as are available,

this retelling of the lives of the famous outlaws reads like folklore.

**THE BOOKMAN'S GLOSSARY.** 3d ed. R. R. Bowker. Pp. 198. \$2.50.

A revised and enlarged work which can save time and often expense for those who write, edit, or supervise publication of printed matter. A generous selection of printing terms are included.

**WALT WHITMAN LOOKS AT THE SCHOOLS.** By FLORENCE B. FREEDMAN. King's Crown Press. Pp. 278. \$3.50.

Whitman is revealed as being the possessor of educational ideas which would classify him as a progressive by modern standards. His opinions are expressed in editorials written for Brooklyn newspapers shortly after he gave up teaching school. The text of most of the editorials is reproduced in full following an introduction.

**THE EDUCATION OF MAN.** Aphorisms by HEINRICH PESTALOZZI. Preface by W. H. KILPATRICK. Philosophical Library. Pp. 92. \$2.75.

Quotable comments by a great educator on a variety of topics generally related to teaching. While they do not add up to any coherent whole, the statements are often strikingly apt.

**THE NEGRO IN POSTWAR AMERICA.** By ARNOLD M. ROSE. "Freedom Pamphlets." Anti-Defamation League (327 S. LaSalle St., Chicago 4). Pp. 31. \$0.25.

An optimistic report on the progress of the Negro in the achievement of equal rights in America. But emphasis is put on the fact that there is still much to be accomplished.

**UNESCO: FIVE YEARS OF WORK.** UNESCO Relations Staff, State Department (Washington, D.C.). Pp. 18. Free. (Offset.)

A skeleton summary of projects completed and in progress.

### Fiction, Poetry, and Plays

**NIGHTRUNNERS OF BENGAL.** By JOHN MASTERS. Viking. \$3.00.

The author, born in Calcutta, fourteen years a soldier in the Indian army, was of the fifth

successive generation of his family to serve in India. This interesting novel is based upon the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857. The cruelty, mystery, and fanaticism of India, and the loyalty of the

English, although tempered with smugness, are blended in this colorful, authentic account of a country even now little understood. February Literary Guild selection.

**A BREATH OF AIR.** By RUMER GODDEN. Viking. \$3.00.

By the author of *Black Narcissus*, etc. The plot was suggested by *The Tempest*. Mr. Van Loomis (Prospero) left his earldom in Scotland to become the despot and only white man on this remote island. His daughter, now twenty-one but an infant when he had taken her there, knows the world only from her father's accounts and his carefully chosen books. In time two young white men flying near were forced to land. The author and the reader use their imaginations. Told with artistry and a fine perception of individual character, both native and Scotch. February Book-of-the-Month Club selection.

**THE DISAPPEARANCE.** By PHILIP WYLIE. Rinehart. \$2.50.

A very clever jacket introduces the idea. On a certain day, suddenly, like a bursting bubble, all the women of the world disappeared from the sight of men; at the same moment all the men disappeared from the lives of women. This condition (hallucination?) lasted for four years. What did it teach women—what did men learn? Wylie, at his best, criticizes civilization and the forces which he believes blind mankind.

**A LITTLE NIGHT MUSIC.** By MARY JANE WARD. Random House. \$3.00.

By the author of *The Snake Pit*. Elizabeth Chapin, fortyish music teacher, finds "the beautiful and brilliant Mrs. Chapin" something of a trial. Elizabeth adores her dead father's memory. There are many characters: relatives, friends, neighbors. One aunt is in a mental hospital much of the time, but she is an interesting, clever character. Elizabeth begins to have doubts about her father's attitude toward her early suitors. She finds that life may "begin at forty." There are many strands to the plot, and it is not always easy to follow.

**THE CHINA RUN.** By NEIL PATERSON. Random House. \$2.75.

A novelette and seven short stories. *The China Run* is the story of a young Scotch wife who took command of her husband's ship when he died at sea. She became quite a personage.

One of the best of the stories is about a midget—"an extraordinary fine specimen." A varied collection, each unusual in theme and cleverly developed. Vital characters.

**INTO THIN AIR.** By WARREN BECK. Knopf. \$3.00.

In a midwestern town a lonely dying old man sits in an upstairs window watching the demolition of the house next door. Many memories are connected with two women who once lived there. His companionship with one, a much older woman, now gone, had meant much to him. There is a great contrast between his life and old age and the serenity of hers. He regrets the failure of his life; but the measure of his failure—his debt to society unpaid, his personal responsibilities denied, the meanings of integrity—does not trouble him greatly. They explain much to the reader. He dies clasping a copy of *Lord Jim* which a woman gave him long ago. Good.

**THE BALANCE WHEEL.** By TAYLOR CALDWELL. Scribner. \$3.50.

By the author of *Dynasty of Death*, to which it bears some resemblance. Charles Wittman, head of a family business, wages a long fight for the good of his company, not always with family backing. His personal problems are also bitter. It has been published serially with some success.

**QUORUM.** By PHYLLIS BENTLEY. Macmillan. \$3.00.

A committee meeting of the Highshaw Textile Mills affords an opportunity to study the private lives of its members. They have their troubles. The background is familiar to readers of Miss Bentley's former novels, but *Quorum* is written in a different vein.

**THE WITCH DIGGERS.** By JESSAMYN WEST. Harcourt. \$3.50.

The setting of this story is an Indiana poor farm early in the 1900's. There is a love story; but the pathetic, outrageous, dramatic group of inmates of the poor farm give the book its charm. The keepers of the farm are not too normal. The "witch diggers" are a sister and brother, paupers, who dig holes over the three-hundred-acre farm searching for happiness. Not always pleasant reading but rather compelling.

**HOME IS AN ISLAND.** By ALFRED LEWIS. Random House. \$3.00.

The story of an immigrant boy who left the Azores in 1922 at the age of thirteen, lured by tales of gold to be found in California. Fictionized, but the experiences were real. This is a tale of his boyhood; he is writing a second book of his later life.

**CAROLINE HICKS.** By WALTER KARIG. Rinehart. \$3.50.

"Wilson calls Federal job life of Riley." Caroline Hicks was a small-town girl with a new job in the Department of the Interior. Karig says of his novel: "a profile of Washington with its hair in curlers—the dominantly female city—glamour and excitement—but disillusionment." An ironic and tragic study of many characters. Not inspiring and quite long, but thought-provoking.

**THE SKY CLEAR: POETRY OF THE AMERICAN INDIANS.** By A. GROVE DAY. Macmillan. \$3.00.

Professor Day is chairman of the department of English at the University of Hawaii. In the Foreword he says: "This book is designed to present to the general reader a discussion of the best extant translations of the poems of the North American Indians produced during the past hundred years." Included are comments and interpretations. Some forty North American tribes are represented.

**FOXFIRE.** By ANYA SETON. Houghton. \$3.00.

A story of a quest for gold and for other things. An aristocratic New York girl married an educated Arizona mining engineer, one-fourth Apache and proud of it. He took a job in a small mining town, and she met people who believed in taboos, legends, and lost villages. The Apache kinfolk had more integrity than some of the whites. But the view and the legends failed to make up for the lack of plumbing. An adventurous and exciting story in modern setting but one told in the old clichés.

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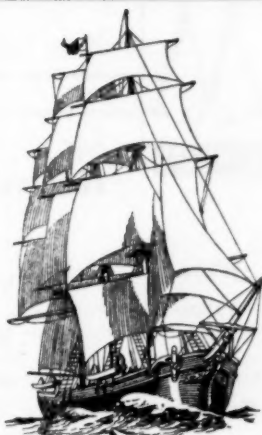
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